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THE HISTORY
OF
REYNARD THE FOX.

THE HISTORY

OF

REYNARD THE FOX,

FROM THE EDITION PRINTED BY CAXTON

IN 1481.

WITH NOTES, AND AN INTRODUCTORY
SKETCH OF THE LITERARY HISTORY
OF THE ROMANCE,

BY

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LONDON.

REPRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY,

BY T. RICHARDS, 100, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

M.DCCC.XLIV.

LONDON: RICHARDS, 100, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

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THOMAS AMYOT, ESQ. F.R.S.

TREASURER OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES,

THIS OLD-WORLD HISTORY,

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF WHICH HE

CAN SO WELL APPRECIATE,

IS DEDICATED,

AS A TESTIMONY OF THE RESPECT AND ESTEEM

OF HIS

FAITHFUL AND ATTACHED FRIEND,

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

THE following pages contain THE HYSTORYE OF REYNARD THE FOXE, as it was printed by Caxton in 1481, a work of considerable interest and literary merit; and one, moreover, of such excessive rarity, that the last copy exposed to public auction produced, at Mr. Inglis's sale, no less a sum than £184. 16s. This copy is now deposited in the matchless library of the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, a gentleman who, from the princely munificence with which he purchases books, and the liberality with which he permits students to make use of them, realizes Chaucer's admirable description of the true scholar—

"Full gladly wold he lerne, and gladly teche."

I beg publicly to return to him my best thanks and acknowledgments, for the readiness with which, at the request of my friend Mr. Amyot, he was kind enough to place in my hands his beautiful copy of the old Dutch REYNAERT DIE VOS, printed by Gheraert de Leeu, from which

Caxton's translation was made. Of the advantage that I thus enjoyed many proofs will be found in the following pages.

The several republications of the History of Reynard the Fox, which appeared during the seventeenth century, professed to be "newly corrected and purged from all grossenesse in phrase and matter;" but notwithstanding such alleged purification, they still contain some most offensive passages.

In the present edition, care has been taken, by the modification of some few words and sentences, which are as little essential to the conduct of the story, as consonant to our present notions of propriety, to lay before the members of the Percy Society a volume which may be perused, it is hoped, with pleasure, certainly without offence. How few and trifling have been the liberties necessary to produce this desirable result, I leave the curious enquirer to ascertain by comparing this reprint with Caxton's own edition: while to those who complain that such alterations or omissions destroy the value of the book, I reply, by denying that such is the case, and by answering that even if it were so, I am prepared to adopt the declaration of Dr. Johnson "that there are laws of higher authority than those of criticism."

Would that I could defend my introduction and

notes as confidently, as I can the reprint which they accompany. But I am too well aware of the errors of omission and commission which may be found in them, not to entertain some anxiety as to the feeling with which my slight illustrations of Caxton's language, and his allusions to the manners and custom of the olden times, may be received by those who are better skilled than myself in those branches of archæological study.

WILLIAM J. THOMS.

31, *Marsham Street, Westminster.*
Whitsun Eve, 1844.

SKETCH

OF THE LITERARY HISTORY OF THE ROMANCE OF

REYNARD THE FOX.

"Was von verwirrung in der Geschichte des Reinekefuchses herzscht, und wie mancher wichtige Punct in derselben noch unaufgeklärt ist, werden diejenigen am besten wissen, die sich mit der Litteratur beschäftigt haben."—FLÖGEL.

§ 1. FOR upwards of five centuries has the world-renowned history of Reynard the Fox, in one or other of its various forms, succeeded in winning golden opinions from all classes of society; its homely wit and quaint humour proving as delightful to the "lewd people," as its truthful pictures of everyday life, and its masterly impersonation of worldly wisdom, have rendered it to the scholar and the philosopher. In Germany, its popularity has been unbounded, far excelling even that which has been bestowed upon its great rival, the Merry Jests of Tyll Eulenspiegel.

One of the most distinguished of the early German poets, J. W. Lawrenberg, is said to have pronounced it the best book in the world, next to the Bible.* No

* See Morhof's Unterricht von der Teutschen Sprache und Poesie, s. 335. The statement was repeated by Hackman in the

such expression is however to be found in any of his published writings; yet the following passage, from the fourth of those celebrated satires which he published in the Low German dialect, will show very distinctly how highly he estimated the work in question:

> "For worldly wisdom never book could claim
> From fitting readers higher praise or fame
> Than the Fox Reynard—a plain book, where clear
> As in a mirror doth sound sense appear;
> For in its rhymes a wit which all must prize,
> Like a rich treasure, half concealéd lies."*

Coming nearer to our own times, we find the accomplished and tasteful Herder recommending it to Goethe, as an old German epic, as fine in its way as the *Iliad* itself; and Goethe, after having once perused it, not only confirming Herder's opinion, but seeking to secure for it additional favour in the eyes of his countrymen, and of all lovers of poetry and humour, by telling the tale anew in his own stately, yet melodious verse, and with his peculiar grace and wit. After this, surely no apology can be necessary for

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Academical Dissertation which he first published in 1709 upon the subject of Reynard, and afterwards prefixed to the reprint of the Low German version, which he published in 1711 from the rare edition printed at Lubeck in 1498.

* "In weltlicher Wysheit ys kein Boeck geschreven
Den men billich mehr Rohm und Loff kann geven
Als Reineke Voss—ein schlicht boek darinnen
Tho sehende ys ein Spegel hoger sinnen;
Vorstendigheit in dem ringen Gedicht
Als ein durbahr schat verborgen licht."

detailing at some length, the various 'famous histories and right merry adventures,' in which the crafty courtier of the King of Beasts plays his busy part; first, however, saying a few words touching the nature and spirit which pervade the numerous stories in which Reynard the Fox figures as the hero.

§ II. Hearne the antiquary, whose judgment cannot be pronounced, like his industry, unquestionable, said, when speaking of the English version of this romance, "It is an admirable thing;" and so far he was right. But when he followed up this assertion with another, viz. "and the design, being political and to represent a wise government, was equally good,"—with all deference be it spoken, he clearly was mistaken. The design is not a political one, neither is it, as others have erroneously characterized it, satirical. Jacob Grimm, in the very first chapter of his introductory essay to the valuable work which he has published upon the subject of Reynard,* enters into a discussion upon this point, and shows very clearly the impossibility of the popular stories, in which animals are the actors, being in their nature satirical. We regret that we are precluded by its length from extracting this chapter, in which the learned author displays a critical acumen only to be

* *Reinhart Fuchs von Jacob Grimm.* Berlin, 1834, 8vo. The work is dedicated to Lachman, to whom, in the year 1840, he addressed a supplement containing his latest discoveries, under the title of "*Sendschrieben an Karl Lachman von Jacob Grimm. Ueber Reinhart Fuchs.*"

excelled by the indefatigable research manifested in the succeeding pages of his work.

In lieu thereof, we will therefore substitute the following profound, albeit quaintly enunciated, comments upon the story, from the pen of one, who being "more German than the Germans," has naturalized among us their semi-æsthetic, semi-mystical, spirit of criticism, making some persons think, and others think that they think. First, protesting however against the heretical notion that any 'true irony' has part or lot in Reynard's history; and at the same time pardoning the heresy (to use the words of Mr. Carlyle himself) as "the product of poor humanity, from whose hands nothing, not even a *Reineke de Fos*, comes perfect."

"This remarkable book comes before us with a character such as can belong only to a very few; that of being a true world's-book, which through centuries was everywhere at home, the spirit of which diffused itself into all languages and all minds. These quaint Æsopic figures have painted themselves in innumerable heads; that rough, deep-lying humour has been the laughter of many generations, so that, at worst, we must regard this Reinecke as an ancient idol, once worshipped, and still interesting for that circumstance, were the sculpture never so rude. We can love it, moreover, as being indigenous, wholly of our own creation, it sprang up from European sense and character, and was a faithful type and organ of these. But independently of all extrinsic considerations, this fable of Reinecke may challenge a judgment on its own merits.

"Cunningly constructed, and not without a true poetic life, we must admit it to be: great power of conception and invention, great pictorial fidelity, a warm sunny tone of colouring, are manifest enough. It is full of broad, rustic mirth; inexhaustible in comic devices: a World-Saturnalia, where Wolves tonsured into Monks and nigh starved by short commons, Foxes pilgriming to Rome for absolution, Cocks pleading at the judgment-bar, make strange mummery. Nor is this Wild Parody of Human Life without its meaning and moral: it is an Air-pageant from Fancy's Dream grotto, yet Wisdom lurks in it; as we gaze, the vision becomes poetic and prophetic. A true Irony must have dwelt in the poet's heart and head: here, under grotesque shadows, he gives us the saddest picture of Reality; yet for us without sadness; his figures mask themselves in uncouth, bestial vizards, and enact, gambolling; their Tragedy dissolves into sardonic grins. He has a deep artful Humour, sporting with the world and its evils in kind mockery: this is the poetic soul, round which the outward material has fashioned itself into living coherence And so, in that rude old Apologue, we have still a mirror, though now tarnished and time-worn, of true magic reality; and can discern there in cunning reflex, some image both of our destiny and of our duty, for now, as then, "Prudence is the only virtue sure of its reward," and Cunning triumphs where Honesty is worsted; and now, as then, it is the wise man's part to know this, and cheerfully look for it, and cheerfully defy it;

"Ut vulpis adulatio
Here thro' his own world moveth,
Sic hominis et ratio
Most like to Reynard's proveth."

"If Reinecke is nowise a perfect Comic Epos, it has various features of such, and, above all, a genuine Epic spirit, which is the rarest feature.

"It has been objected that the animals in Reinecke are not animals, but men disguised; to which objection, except in so far as grounded on the necessary indubitable fact that this is an Apologue or emblematic Fable, and no Chapter of Natural History, we cannot in any considerable degree accede. Nay, that very contrast between Object and Effort, where the Passions of men develope themselves on the Interests of animals, and the whole is huddled together in chaotic mockery, is a main charm of the picture. For the rest, we should rather say, these bestial characters were moderately well sustained: the vehement, futile vociferation of Chanticleer; the hysterical promptitude, and earnest profession, and protestation of poor Lampe the Hare; the thick-headed ferocity of Isegrym; the sluggish, gluttonous, rapacity of Bruin; above all, the craft, the tact, and inexhaustible knavish adroitness of Reinecke himself, are in strict accuracy of costume. Often also their situations and occupations are bestial enough. What quantities of bacon and other proviant do Isegrim and Reinecke forage; Reinecke contributing the scheme,—for the two were then in partnership,—and Isegrim paying the shot in broken bones! What more characteristic than the

fate of Bruin, when, ill-counselled he introduces his stupid head into Rustefill's half-split log; has the wedges whisked away, and stands clutched there, as in a vice, and uselessly roaring, disappointed of honey, sure only of a beating without parallel! Not to forget the Mare, whom, addressing her by the title of Goodwife, with all politeness, Isegrim, sore-pinched with hunger, asks whether she will sell her foal, she answers that the price is written in her hinder hoof: which document the intending purchaser, being 'an Erfurt graduate,' declares his full ability to read; but finds there no writing, or print, save only the print of six horsenails on his own mauled visage, and abundance of the like, sufficient to excuse an old epos on this head, or altogether justify it."*

§ III. To proceed however with the history of the Renardine stories, which had their origin in times far different from this *rail-road* age; in times when men were in daily contact with the world of animals, either in tending their peaceful flocks, chasing the wild deer, or hunting down the beasts of the forest. The peculiarities of the different animals

* From an article by Mr. Carlyle on *German Literature of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, in the Foreign Quarterly Review, No. XVI. And here it may be as well to remark, lest the reader may recognize in the present sketch much of the materials of another article (in No. XXXIV of the same Review), that the only excuse which the Editor of this reprint can offer for the appropriation, is, the right to do as he pleases with his own.

were brought by one or other of these causes constantly before their eyes, were constantly becoming the subject of their speculation; and the consideration, that, in many respects, the living creatures which they saw around them resembled the human race, that, in some, as in sharpness of sight, quickness of hearing, and acuteness of the organs of smell, they far excelled them, gave rise to numerous suppositions as to the relationship which they bore to man; and these form the foundation of all those fables in which animals enact their parts. Concerning the two great requisites for the construction of these fables, Grimm speaks as follows:

"In the first place, the fable must exhibit the animals as being endowed with human reason, and initiated into all the customs and conditions of our mode of living, so that their behaviour has nothing at all odd in it. The murdered hen is carried on a bier, with cries of murder, before the king, who orders the service of the dead to be performed and an epitaph to be placed over her. The men of the fable do not hesitate to recognize the tonsure of the wolf, who speaks their language, when he prays to be received into the monastery. The peasant enters into a formal contract with the fox on the subject of his poultry, and in his trial with the animal, recognizes the lion as the common judge between them. But then, on the other hand, the peculiarities of the nature of the several animals must be brought into play and made of good effect. Thus the cock sings standing upon

one leg, and shutting his eyes—a characteristic trait, entirely copied from nature. So, in his battle with the wolf, does the fox avail himself of all his natural cunning. In like manner, the cat's deeply-impressed propensity for mice, the bear's fondness for honey, are necessary *levers* of the fable, from which the most taking situations arise. Without this uniting into one, of two in reality opposing elements, the animal fable (*Thierfabel*) cannot exist. Whosoever would invent stories in which the animals merely comported themselves like men, but were occasionally gifted with the names and forms of animals, would fail as completely in catching the spirit of the fable, as he who should attempt to exhibit the animals with all the truth of nature, without human address and without the aimed-at action of men. If the animals of the fable be without any smack of humanity, the fable becomes absurd; if they are without traces of their animal nature, it becomes wearisome."

Thus much of the nature of these fables. As we have already observed, Grimm denies that there exists in them any tendency to satire. He doubts, moreover, and with good show of reason, whether their object was didactic. "Fable," says he, "is now entirely instructive, yet I believe its first beginning not to have been instruction." But we must leave his speculations upon this point, and his shrewd criticism upon the claims of La Fontaine and Lessing to be considered as successful fabulists, and commence our view of the rise and progress of the far-famed adventures of Reynard the Fox.

§ IV. Some critics of Reynard, acting upon that wise and ancient law of tale-tellers, "*Initiamus ab initio*," have endeavoured to discover the precise moment when the events recorded by the historians of Reynard are supposed to have happened. Without entering into speculations so recondite, we shall not greatly err, if we ascribe them to that interesting period spoken of by the venerable chronicler of St. Denis, as "ce tans que les bestes parloient,"—an epoch likewise referred to by the sagacious Bertoldo as one "quando le bestie parlavano." What was the language thus spoken by animals in the olden time, is a matter hard to decide, but we may fairly presume that it was one of the learned languages. A competent authority has asserted that Latin was formerly employed by birds:

"Li oisiaux dist en son Latin,"

says Li Lais de l'Oiselet.

But though the question as to when Reynard flourished is involved in this obscurity, the labours of modern antiquaries have thrown considerable light upon the next question, namely, when his name was chosen, like that of the great Gustavus,

"To point a moral and adorn a tale."

Grimm produces a host of witnesses to show how widely spread and favourably received Reynard's History was in the days gone by. Gautier de Coinsi, one of the best poets of his age, who, as a pious ecclesiastic, held in slight estimation all the profane materials of poetry, maintains, when speaking of his "*Miracles de la Vierge*," which was completed in 1233, that

"Plus delitous sont si fait conte
As bones gens, par saint Omer,
Que de *Renart*, ne de *Roumer*,
Ne de *Tardiu* le limeçon;"

and further observes that even churchmen were more desirous of having representations from this fable in their chambers, than images of the saints in their churches:

"En leur moustiers ne font pas faire
Sitost limage Notre Dame
Com font *Isangrin* et sa *fame*
En leur chambres ou il reponent."

Another proof of the early popularity of this story may be found in Saint Foix's "Essais Historiques sur Paris," where we are told that Philip le Bel, probably to mortify the Pope (Boniface VIII, who died 1303), with whom he was on bad terms, caused the "Procession Renart" to be solemnly represented, in which a mummer, clothed in the skin of a fox, over which he wore a priest's robes, performed mass, and then ran after and devoured the poultry; and it is probable that such exhibitions were frequent.

§ v. The Provençals, as far as we at present know, never selected Reynard for the hero of any poems. Nevertheless, it is obvious that, from their intercourse with the Normans and their acquaintance with the literature of their rivals, they soon became familiar with his exploits; and the consequence is, that amongst the lyrical compositions of the Troubadours we find allusions to this story older than any poem by a

Trouveur now extant on the subject; older than the lost Norman-French poems of this cyclus, however, they can scarcely be.

For instance, our own monarch, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, in a Sirvente, which must have been written between 1169 and 1199, has an allusion to the story—

> "E vos juoastes ot moi,
> E men portastes tiel foi
> Com *Naengris a Reinaert.*"

Gavaudan, who wrote about 1195, Peire de Bussinac, who according to Raynouard flourished before the end of the twelfth century, and many other celebrated writers among the Provençals, allude to it.

In Spain and Italy the history of Reynard seems to have been but little known; while, on the other hand, the story is shown to have been highly popular in Flanders at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Subsequently to 1229, but before 1250, a canon of Liege,* when relating the victory of his countrymen over Duke Henry of Brabant, says, "*Dux autem, (Brabantinus) suorum videns interitum, fugit ad ipsum comitem (Farrandum, Flandrensem), quærens inducias et veniam de commisso. Super cujus palliata hypocrisi Flandrenses indignati proceres, 'Eya', inquiunt, 'Rainardus factus est monachus.'*"

Shortly before this, in 1204 and 1206, occurred

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* Whose work forms properly the third book of the "Vita S. Odiliæ Leodiensis," printed in the second volume of Chapeaville.

another event recorded in the history of Flanders, which shows how widely spread was Reynard's reputation at that time. Mathilda, the widowed countess, was at open war with a party of her subjects. The adherents of Mathilda assumed the name of Isangriner (*Isangrini*); those who were opposed to them being designated Blaufusser (*Blavotini*). Such is the statement of a contemporary, Rigordus, in his history De Gestis Philippi Augusti,* and his testimony is confirmed by Guilermus Brito, and the later evidence of Philip Mouskes, who was bishop of Tournai from 1274 to 1282, and says in his Rhyming Chronicle,

> "Et grant douaire tint vers Ipre
> En cele tiere des *Isengrins*,
> Qui haoient les *Blavotins*."

Jacob Meyer, in his Chronicon Flandriæ, mentions the circumstance, and explains the allusion to the wolf in the name of the Isangriner, but is unable to do the same for that of the Blavoter. Grimm, however (and the circumstance of its being the name of the opposite faction, calls for some such explanation), assumes that the epithet is connected with the history of the fox, who, as he shows very clearly, was sometimes designated by the coaxing names of Blaufuss (Bluefoot) and Schwarzfuss (Blackfoot).†

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* Duchesne, v. 54.

† See some curious illustrations of this, and other instances of the Flemish custom of giving emblematic names to their different factions, in an article on "Belgian Literature and Reynard the Fox," in the twentieth number of the British and Foreign Review.

§ v. But the earliest testimony to the existence of popular stories in which the fox and the wolf exhibit those peculiar traits by which they are characterized in the Reynardine fables, afforded by the Abbot Guibert de Nogent in his Autobiography. It proves them to have been as familiar to the natives of Picardy at the commencement of the twelfth century, as the passages we have quoted above shew them to have been to the Flemings a century later. Guibert, or Wibert, a native of Beauvais, was elected Abbot of the Monastery of Nogent, near Coucy, in 1104, and died in 1124. He wrote three books, De Vita sua, which were published among his collected works at Paris, by Lucas d'Achery, in 1651; and in book 3, cap. 8, p. 507, he relates the murder, in 1112, of Gualdricus, or Waldricus, Bishop of Laon, in Picardy, who had made himself hated by his crimes and offences. The insurgents sought everywhere for the bishop, who had concealed himself at their approach; at last they examined the cellar, "cum itaque per singula eum vasa disquirerent, iste (Teudegaldus, the chief of the murderers) pro fronte tonnulæ illius in qua latebat homo, substitit, et retuso obice scisitabatur ingeminando 'Quis esset?' Cumque vix eo fustigante gelida jam ora movisset, 'Captivus,' inquit.—Solebat autem episcopus eum *Isengrimum* irridendo vocare, propter lupinam scilicet speciem: *sic enim aliqui solent appellare lupos.* Ait ergo scelestus ad præsulem, 'Hiccine est *dominus Isengrinus* repositus?' Renulfus igitur, quamvis peccator, christus (i. e. unctus) tamen Domini, de

vasculo capillis detrahitur." In this remarkable passage, obscure as it is towards the conclusion, in which we should probably read *Renardus* instead of Renulfus, we see that in 1112 this fable was so well known, that the name of Isengrim was satirically applied to a wild-looking man, and moreover that every one of the common people understood the allusion. From hence we may reasonably infer that in the North of France this characteristic fable was then one generation old at least; that it might, in short, date its rise from the middle of the eleventh century.

§ VI. We have thus historical testimony to the fact of the story being current at the commencement of the twelfth century. The names of the chief actors afford philological evidence of its existence in still earlier times. We will not follow Grimm through the eight-and-twenty pages occupied by his chapter upon the *Thiernamen* (names of the animals); but we have long felt that the very name of the fox in the French romances upon the subject, served to prove, not only that those romances were not of French origin (for, had they been so, the old French appellative of the fox, *Goupil*, and not the Teutonic *Reinard*, would have obtained as the name of the hero), but that the German writers had reason on their side when they claimed the credit of this favourite narrative for their countrymen. We shall content ourselves with extracting one passage from Grimm, important for the etymological grounds which it affords for supposing that

stories of the Fox and Wolf were known to the Franks as early as the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries.

After showing that the names applied to the several animals, far from being vague and unmeaning, were originally strictly significant, Grimm proceeds to specify the several classes into which these epithets were capable of being divided, and then to make those observations on the name of the fox, which form the passage which follows.

"*Renart, Reinhart,* in its earlier form *Reginhart,* still earlier *Raginohard, Ragnohard,* is a proper name of frequent occurrence in documents of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, the meaning of which has long ceased to be thoroughly understood. Smaragd, a Benedictine monk of Lorraine, who, about 816, or still earlier, completed a Donatus which has never been printed, explains *Reinhart* by 'nitidum consilium,' erroneously taking *rain* for *hreni* (purus, nitidus). But how did he come by 'consilium,' which can in no wise exist in *hart?* Is it through transposition in *rât?* Has he confounded with it the somewhere-acquired proper meaning of the first word? It appears so; for *ragin,* regin, is without doubt 'consilium' in the Gothic language throughout.* In the later dialects, the word began to disappear, and to exist only in combination. Probably the Frankish has preserved it longer, for the well-known *raginboron* were—the before the tribunal giving counsel, the ad-

* Philem. 14, *ragineis,* consiliarius, senator. Mark xv. 43; Rom. xi. 34.

vising, the deciding — the Anglo-Saxon *rædboran*, Frisian *réd-jewa.** The writing of the Lex Sal. *racin*, *rachin* (and before b *rachim*) is of no consequence, because, for example, *lacina* is there written for *lagina*. Thus *Raginhard*, is *expert in counsel*, *adviser*, and we have before seen that, throughout all these fables, the fox was actually the adviser. Moreover the French poem seems to exhibit a knowledge of this fact, probably from following closely its *in*comprehended original source:

> 'Si ai maint *bon conseil* doné,
> Par mon droit non ai non Renart,'—l. 15876.

'I have much good counsel given, by my right name I am called Reinhart.' From this it is clear that the name of Reinhart in these fables was a characteristic one, and that it was originally applied to the fox on that account. It is therefore not to be wondered that a so deeply-contrived name of an animal became firmly rooted in the Frankish tongue, that it could even supplant the French appellative goupil, and from *Renart* at last became *renard*. But what appears more important, the first application, or finding of the name, must be traced up to a period at which the sense of the word *ragin* was generally perceptible, consequently our fables (*Thierfabel*) go back far beyond the twelfth century. I venture to maintain that this name alone justifies the supposition that the Fables of the Fox and the Wolf were known to the Franks in the fourth,

* Rechts-Alterthümer, 774, 787.

fifth and sixth centuries, when they used the yet unalloyed German tongue, dulled by no influx of the Gaulish language—that they took the fables with them from Germany across the Rhine."*

§ VII. The next question for our examination is the locality in which the Renardine fables now possessed by us took their rise. This will not take us long, for the ground on which they could have sprung is not widely spread, nor indeed should we have alluded in this place to their local origin, but that we were anxious to call attention to the extraordinary fact, that this peculiar cycle of popular poetry acquired its popular and long enduring form, in those very regions in which that branch of the painter's art which may be pronounced of a cognate nature with the works under consideration—we mean, of course, cattle and landscape painting—has been cultivated with fond perseverance and pre-eminent success. For not only is it in Flanders, and the countries immediately adjoining to it—the north of France, and the western parts of Germany—that these poems have flourished most luxuriantly, as we shall take the opportunity of showing when we bring these various compositions under the notice of our readers, but Flanders is the scene of that history of Reynard, which, derived from the Flemish, now enjoys an European reputation, being, in fact, the type of the whole Renardine cycle; while the allusions to Flanders are so numerous in the various branches of the French Renart, as to leave

* Grimm, *Reinhart Fuchs, Introduction*, pp. ccxl-ccxlii.

little doubt that it was from that country the authors of those poems gathered their materials. The reader shall have proof of this in the words of that excellent and patriotic Flemish antiquary, M. Willems, who was commissioned to edit the old Flemish Reinaert, from the manuscript purchased by the Belgian government at Heber's sale, and who in his introduction to that work, thus speaks upon this very point:*—

"The scene of the adventures of Reynard and Isengrim, is throughout laid in Flanders, with the exception of one incident, which occurs in the district of Varmandois,† (verse 1514), and that this excursion of the fox and the wolf is not spoken of as if it had caused them to quit their own country, is sufficiently explained by the political circumstances of the times. By the marriage of Philip of Alsace, Earl of Flanders, to the daughter and sole heir of the Earl of Vermandois, who died in 1163, Vermandois was in that year united to Flanders, and continued so until 1186. In this intervening period, the Reinaert was most probably written, or how, otherwise, could Vermandois be introduced into it?

"In another place, the Fox speaks of the treasure of King Ermenrick, buried under a tree at Hulsterloo, which Hulsterloo is in a very wild, and unfrequented place ;‡ and the *Witte-Bock* of the Archives of Ghent,

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* Willems' *Reinaert de Vos*, 8vo. Ghent, 1836. Introduction, p. xxxv.

† See page 32 of this edition.

‡ See p. 53 of this edition.

informs us, that pilgrimages to Our Lady of Hulsterloo, were frequent in the middle ages; for in that place the pilgrims offered their devotions to a miraculous image, which, according to a note to the unpublished chronicle of the abbey of Dronghen, near Ghent, had been removed thither from Teruane. Our Lady being offended at the slight reverence paid to her by the inhabitants of Teruane, commanded that her image should be placed somewhere else, which was accordingly done, in the sight of vast multitudes of people; two doves flying before the bearers of the image, leading them, like guides, until they came to Hulsterloo. The numbers which then visited it there were so great, as to cause a scarcity of food in Ghent.

"Hulsterloo, by Kieldrect, with its wood, wastes, and moors, was ceded to the abbey of Dronghen in the year 1136. It is very probable that some years after that time, the monks of the abbey erected a chapel in that place to the honour of the Blessed Virgin, which might account for the celebrity of her image there among the Flemings; and the crowds which visited it during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, in short, until Hulsterloo itself was destroyed by an inundation. But if it was a desolate place when Reinaert was written, the poem must be older than the transportation of the miraculous image, and, consequently, as old as the twelfth century."

Isengrim's becoming a monk in the cloister of Elmare,* and the mention of Herman, abbot of St. Mar-

* See p. 42 of the present edition.

tin's, at Dornick,* and of Godfridus Andegavensis,† both of whom lived in the earlier part of the twelfth century, are also cited by Willems, as proofs indicative, not only of the age of the Reinaert, but also of its being of Flemish origin.

§ VIII. Before we commence our notice of the principal works connected with the popular cycle of romance in which the Fox figures so conspicuously, we have a few preliminary remarks to make on the fact of the lion, a stranger, in our days at least, to the forests of the European continent, appearing in these histories as the acknowledged king of beasts. We had thought of noticing the peculiar fitness of the fox and the wolf, formerly the most populous denizens of our coverts, for the parts which they are called upon to perform. We pass this by, however, that we may examine the probable cause of the lion's being invested with regal authority. This circumstance would seem, at once, to contradict the Teutonic, or indeed European origin of the fable. But, setting aside our knowledge that lions were formerly brought into Europe from their native wilds, to be exhibited as important objects in royal and princely pageants—that proof of their

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* "Ja ic, hets iii jaer, dat ic waert
Voor den deken Hermanne
In vollen seende te banne."—*Reinaert*, l. 2736-8, ed. Willems.

† Maester Jufroet, in the Comburgh MS. of *Reinaert*. In the Heber MS. Gelis: and in the old prose ed. of Gerard de Leu, Geliis, and not Dielis, as Willems states in his note, p. 120. He probably quoted from Suhl's reprint.

being indigenous to Europe might be adduced from those poets who tell us that Sigfrid was wont to hunt lions in the Burgundian forests—both which circumstances might be considered sufficiently explanatory of the motives which induced the writers of these fables to invest the lion with sovereignity over all the other animals who figure in these narratives; another and more satisfactory explanation is afforded by the fact, that there is good reason for believing, that the lion has, in comparatively modern times, usurped the crown which the bear originally possessed, both *de jure* and *de facto*. The bear is, indeed, the strongest and the largest of all our indigenous animals—the true king of our European forests; and Grimm, after showing that, in the old German language, the roaring of the lion and the growling of the bear were both expressed by one and the same word, viz. *bremin*,—and further (which is very remarkable with regard to this point) that in the old Norse tongue, the highest authority was expressed by *bersa leyfi* (licentia ursi), adduces satisfactory evidence, the particulars of which we shall not attempt to follow, that in Germany, in the tenth century, and earlier, the kingly authority over the beasts of the forests was considered to belong, not to the lion, but to the bear; who, in the works now handed down to us is still exhibited as second only to the lion in power and influence; and the bear is, in fact, next to the fox and the wolf, the most important personage in these oft-told tales.

§ IX. But it is time that we proceed from these introductory and general observations to a more parti-

cular examination of some of the most important of those numerous literary productions, to which the popularity of Reynard's history has given rise.

The first of these in point of date, though not of literary merit, is a poem, of which two MSS. were discovered in the royal library at Brussels, by Dr. Jacob Grimm, soon after the publication of that great work upon the subject of Reynard, to which such frequent allusion is necessarily made in the course of the present volume.

It was published by Grimm in the year 1838, in a curious and valuable collection of Latin poems of the tenth and eleventh century, which he edited in that year in conjunction with Andreas Schmeller.* This poem is entitled *Ecbasis cujusdam captivi per Tropologiam*, and consists of 1229 leonine verses, the principal part being occupied with the story of the lion's illness, told by the wolf, as explanatory of the feud between the fox and himself, and the anger of the king of beasts against the fox, who alone neglected to attend and bring medicines for his recovery—a fact which the wolf takes care to bring under the lion's notice.

> "The fox alone, when lion is sick,
> Absents at once himself and physic,
> A fact which in due course is rung
> In royal ears by hostile tongue."†

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* *Lateinische Gedichte des X und XI Jh. Herausgegeben von Jac. Grimm und And. Schmeller.* Gottingen, 8vo. 1838.

† "Absunt a reliquis cautæ medicamina vulpis,
Auribus hæc regis mox infert sedulus hostis."
Ecbasis, 402-3.

An angry decree is fulminated against the fox, who in this, as in other versions of the same story, unexpectedly appears at court, and, by his ingenuity, triumphs over all his opponents, more especially his great enemy the wolf, at once punishing him, and curing his sovereign by the extraordinary remedy which he prescribes for the ailing monarch, namely—that he should be enveloped in the wolf's hide.

The value of this poem, which Grimm has subsequently pronounced not to have been written at a later period than the middle of the tenth century,* is considerably lessened by its not designating the animals by the characteristic names assigned to them in later works. Yet, that the poem in question is immediately connected with, and founded upon the popular stories of Reynard, is clear, from the fact that its main incident,—the sickness of the lion,—occurs in all, or nearly all, the Reynardine romances. The same objection, viz. the absence of the Reynardine names, may be made to a little Latin poem, which was communicated to us many years since by Mr. Wright, and which will be found appended to this introduction.†

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* See *Sendschrieben an Lachmann, s.* 4.

† See Appendix I.

This little poem, entitled 'Sacerdos et Lupus,' which corresponds with the twelfth branch of the French *Renart*, is contained in a MS. in the Public Library at Cambridge (Gg v. p. 35) supposed to have been written in Germany, about the middle of the eleventh century, by an Anglo-Saxon. It is printed by Grimm (*Lateinische Gedichte, s.* 340), to whom it was communicated by

§ x. The next in point of time and the first in which the animals are designated by their distinctive names, is a Latin poem, now printed for the first time by Grimm, from a manuscript of the fourteenth century, preserved at Berlin. "Isengrimus," as this poem is designated, contains 688 verses, and, though considerably shorter than the Latin poem "Reinardus Vulpes," published by Mone, it is not only obviously of greater antiquity, but surpasses it in the power of description which it displays. It comprises, however, only two stories—the first is, "The Sickness of the Lion;" and the second, which is very skilfully combined with it, relates "The Pilgrimage of the Goat." It commences as follows:

> "It whilom chanced so sick the lion lay,
> He could not feed by night, nor sleep by day;
> A die, of life or death, the fate did bear,
> And hope fast faded 'fore increasing fear;
> The season too, his ills to increase strove,
> For Phœbus then through fiery Cancer drove."*

He had been removed, for the sake of coolness, to the shady coverts of the wood, and ordered a general court, proclaimed a solemn peace, and summoned before

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Mr. Kemble; and also by Edelstand du Meril, p. 302 of his *Poesies Populaires Latines.*

* "Contigit arreptum forti languore leonem,
Nil dormire, nichil sumere posse cibi.
Alea judicium vite mortisque trahebat,
Et spe liberior ceperat esse metus;
Quin morbi rabiem sors tempestatis alebat,
Cum traheret Cancri Phebus in arce rotam."—v. 1-6.

him all the beasts of the forest, that he might secure their allegiance to his wife and children, and during his lifetime nominate his successor. Reynard is the only one who absents himself: he waits for a special summons. Isengrim, the wolf, his inveterate enemy, who is greatly rejoiced at this, thrusts himself ostentatiously forward, and, having attracted the attention of the lion, slanders the fox, and tells the royal invalid that it would much conduce to his recovery to eat the livers of the ram and of the goat, and, when convalescent, their flesh. But the manner in which this is told deserves an extract;

"The royal lion smiled, as thus he said,
(While his harsh voice filled every beast with dread)
'Good Isengrim, near me a seat secure,
I think thou wouldst relate what would me cure.
If so, out with it!' Straight the wolf obeys,
Sits, slightly hems, his pulse then feels, and says,
'Fear not, great king. Sound health will soon be thine,
To pay each traitor off in his own coin.' "*

But to proceed: Joseph, the ram, and Berfridus, the goat, who had listened with great indignation to the suggestions of the wolf, give him such hints with

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* "Ipse parum ridet leo, sicque profatur: eratque
Vocis ad horrorem concio tota tremens.
'Ysengrime comes, prope me sessurus adisti:
Credo, referre paras quod michi prestet opem.
Exere si quid habes.' Proprius sedet ille, parumque
Tussit, et ut veniam palpitat, inquit ita.
'Pone metum, rex, pone. Vales, virtute reversa:
Redde suam fidei perfidieque vicem.' "—v. 49-56.

the points of their horns, as are not to be mistaken, that he must leave the throne, and take his place among the cats, for that his knowledge of medicine was nothing worth:

"'Scis nichil, Isengrime: fuge hinc,' ait omnis, 'abito.'"

Gusthero, the hare, is then despatched with a summons to the fox, who is called upon to display his skill in leech-craft; he is, however, desired by Reynard to return forthwith to court, and say he could not find him. He accordingly does so, and is, after awhile followed by Reynard, who appears laden with a quantity of healing herbs, and a number of old worn-out shoes. The lion makes no reply to his thrice proffered salutation. "Pulcra," remarks the Fox aside,

"'Pulcra,' ait, 'hic merces pro pietate datur;'"

and then, in answer to the questions of his sovereign, he explains that, upon the announcement of his royal master's illness, instead of merely presenting himself at court, as all the other nobles of the land had done, he had taken a wearisome journey to Salerno, to find an effectual remedy for his disease, and in doing so had worn out an incredible number of shoes—producing these in proof of the accuracy of his statement. He then goes on to explain, that only one thing further is required to ensure his sovereign's recovery, which is that, when he takes the medicine, he must promote copious perspiration by enveloping himself in the thick and grey hide of a wolf three years and a half old, and suggests that Isengrim may lend his for that pur-

pose, and, when the cure is effected, it can be returned to him. Isengrim, upon hearing this, seeks to escape, but being prevented, pleads that he is an old wolf, and not a young one. Reynard does not admit this excuse, but proves, from his being just two years and a half old when a certain event took place in the goat's house a twelvemonth before—that he is just of the right age. The ass, the goat, and the ram are called, and confirm the truth of Reynard's statement, who however decides at last that any wolf's skin, be it young or old, will answer the purpose. The lion accordingly commands the bear to flay the wolf, which he does, helping him off with his tunic after the French fashion ;—

"Ut tunicam France deposuisse queas"—

but leaving the shaggy covering on his head and paws.

This circumstance, as well as the redness of his bleeding limbs, gives rise to many bitter jests ; such as taunting his disloyalty in not always wearing his gay red dress at court, instead of the old grey skin in which he was accustomed to appear ; and when the poor beast stretches forth his paws, and bows his head that his implacable antagonist may tear away the skin from them, Reynard upbraids him, that it became a suppliant to appear bare-headed and with naked hands, and not with his head covered, and with gloves, as if he were insolently going to challenge his sovereign to a combat. At length the wolf is allowed to escape, with the understanding that his skin will be taken care

of for him until he thinks proper to reclaim it. The lion takes the medicine prescribed by the fox, and ensconces himself in the wolf's hide—

> "A copious sweat the fever straight subdued:
> He woke refreshed, nay more he asked for food;
> Then better slept, and ate, until at length
> His former health returned in all its strength."*

Rich gifts marked the obligation of the lion to his physician.

> "The king an honour to the fox ordained,
> Which 'fore or since no other beast obtained,
> Fearless to cross the marks his tail should leave.
> The bear and boar no grant like this receive."†

During the king's progress towards convalescence, he is entertained by the fox, who relates to him the particulars of that adventure of the wolf, to which he had before alluded; these are as follows:—

Bertiliana, the she-goat, went forth upon a pilgrimage. At first she was alone, but was afterwards joined by seven companions, to each of whom some peculiar duty was allotted. Rearidus the stag, Joseph the ram, and Berfrid the goat, being furnished with

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* "Jamque fluunt febres largo sudore solute:
Evigilans surgit, poscit et ipse cibum;
Tunc, melius meliusque valens, dormivit et edit,
Dum rediit pleno robore prisca salus."—l. 511-514.

† "Precipuo vulpem Renardum donat honore,
Quem nemo meruit postea, nemo prius,
Intrepidum transire sue vestigia caude.
Non hoc contigerant ursus aperque decus."—l. 516-20.

horns, formed the van-guard. Reynard is the quarter-master; the ass is the janitor, and carrier of the baggage; Gerardus the goose keeps watch at night, and Sprotinus the cock is the time-keeper. An old wolf, who was lurking close by, had overheard the treaty, and determined, as he was very anxious to make one of the party, to creep in amongst them on the very first opportunity. Reynard had however spied him out, and laid his plans accordingly. For, having found a dead wolf hanging upon a tree, he cut off his head and gave it to Joseph, with special directions how he was to act, should the wolf intrude among them. Night approached: the travellers seated themselves to their evening meal. In his anxiety for his supper the ass neglects to fasten the door—

"asinum furor urget edendi"—

and Isengrim bursts in upon them exclaiming, "Peace be with you!" The party are at first greatly alarmed, but soon recover themselves. Bertiliana inquired, "What shall we place before our guest?"—"There is nothing but the grey head of an old wolf," replied Joseph. "Bring that in then," said the fox. Joseph brought in the head accordingly, at the sight of which Isengrim clapped his tail between his legs, and wished himself far enough away. "This head won't do," quoth Reynard, "take it away, and bring a larger one?" Joseph went out and brought the same again. "That won't do either," said Reynard; "the large heads are in the other corner. Fetch in two of the seven very

big ones; or, stop, bring that fine one that is stretched open with the hazel-twig, that is just fit for eating." Joseph went out and brought in the same again, but with its jaws stuck open with a bit of wood. The wolf trembled violently, and the several animals pretended to comfort him. Gerardus the goose thought he was suffering from ague, or perhaps from fear of himself. "Be of good cheer," said the goose, "I have no wish to terrify you; not but what I could if I wished, for the wolf whose head you see there, and which I snapped off, was a great deal stronger and more cunning than you are."—"Our guest had better eat," cried Joseph, "he need not care for the expense, we have enough for this nine or ten nights, if he will only stay with us."—"I am very ill," said the wolf, "and what is more, very much astonished, for whoever saw a party of pilgrims carrying with them so many wolves' heads?"—"We never catch any but wicked wolves," said Reynard; "we never meddle with our dear guests." "I am expected at home," continued the wolf, "my wife and children are waiting for me." —"Won't you go with us?" the stag cried out after him; "on our way we lay hold of all the wolves we find in the forest, and either hang them up in the trees, or starve them to death. You shall help us and be the hangman!"—"I am too young for so great an honour, I am only two years and a half old," replied the wolf, and so saying he took his departure.

> "Ille refert, 'decus hoc mea non sibi vendicat etas
> Dimidians lustrum,' sicque solutus abit."

Such are the contents of "Isengrimus," a poem written, as is evident from various circumstances, in South Flanders, during the first half of the twelfth century, probably earlier, for the "Reinardus," which is certainly not so old, was composed about the middle of that century. And this affords additional proof, if such were necessary, that the Reynardine fables were in general circulation during the whole of the eleventh century; for we may be sure that, when an ecclesiastic (and that this work was the production of a writer of that class is obvious from the traces of classical learning which it exhibits) took it into his head to relate in Latin verse detached stories selected from a whole cycle of romance, that cycle was one which had long been current in the songs and traditions of the people.

§ xi. The poem which we have just examined forms a portion of, or rather is engrafted into, that more extensive work, containing 6596 lines, the "Fabella Lupina," as it is designated in one of the three manuscripts from which it was printed, which was published some years since by Mone, under the title of "Reinardus Vulpes."* This publication has certainly been of considerable service, as the poem in question is undoubtedly one of the most valuable monuments of the literature of the middle ages, which have of late been

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* *Reinardus Vulpes. Carmen Epicum seculis IX et XII conscriptum. Ad fidem Codd. MSS. edidit et adnotationibus illustravit* Franciscus Josephus Mone. *Reinhart Fuchs aus dem neunten und zwölften Jahrhundert. Herausgegeben und erläutert* von F. J. Mone. 8vo. Stuttgart und Tübingen. 1832.

given to the world; and it may well excite our surprise, that so extensive and highly interesting a work, should have remained so long entirely unknown, and indeed not have been published till our own time: a fact, which can scarcely be explained by the supposition that the clergy, to whom some parts of it must certainly have been peculiarly displeasing, took every means in their power to suppress it.

While we thank the editor for the publication of the text, we feel bound to express our regret, that in his notes he should have indulged in so many fanciful and unfounded views, especially with regard to the age of the poem, which he asserts, without a shadow of evidence, to have been originally composed in the ninth century, and afterwards interpolated in the twelfth; and to contain, under the semblance of a romance, an allegorical history of the affairs and quarrels of various well-known personages; among whom he supposes Zwentibolcus, King of Lorraine, and son of the Emperor Arnulf, and who flourished towards the close of the ninth century, to be represented as Isengrimus the Wolf, and his minister, Reginarius, as Reinardus the Fox.

Before we analyse the poem, it will, therefore, be as well to demolish, as we trust to do with a very few words, these "*grillenfangereyen*" (as his countrymen characteristically designate such whimsical speculations) of Professor Mone, whose peculiar notions on the subject of the poem were first made generally known in a series of papers in the "*Morgenblatt*" for

1831 (No. 222-6), to which the purchaser of the book is very coolly referred, if, as is most likely, not being contented with the opinions set forth in the Professor's notes to the poem, he wishes to learn (which he ought to do from the preface) the Editor's detailed opinion of the work in question.

But let us proceed. In the first place, there is not the slightest ground for attributing any part of the poem to a writer of the ninth century; for though portions of it may appear to be in a somewhat earlier style, there is nothing in them to justify in the least the supposition of their being the production of that early period. Reinardus is obviously not a piece of pure invention; the style in which the story is related, and the oftentimes uncalled-for instances of book-learning which it exhibits, are the author's own. But he himself refers to some written authority:—

"Gavisam *scriptura* refert his lusibus illam."—v. 1879.

This *scriptura* was probably some earlier and more simple Latin history, which, if it contained all the materials of the present poem (and it most probably did so, the Isengrimus forming perhaps a portion only of some more extensive work, the rest of which is lost), that fact must tend greatly to diminish the value of Reinardus in our opinion. It is possible, however, though much less probable, that an earlier poem in the vernacular tongue, and current among the common people, formed the basis of the present work.

That the Poem was written between the years 1148

and 1160, is proved, by the author's apostrophising two ecclesiastics who were personally friendly to him. These were, Walter, prior of Egmond,* and Baldwin, prior of Lisborn, in Westphalia. Walter was a native of Flanders; and in the year 1129 was at the head of an ecclesiastical establishment at Lens in Artois, attached to the Abbey of Ghent. In that year the bishop of Utrecht and the Countess of Holland wished to nominate some worthy ecclesiastic from Ghent to the Abbey of Egmond; Arnold, abbot of Ghent, recommended Walter, who was accordingly appointed, and filled the situation from 1130 to 1161 with the highest credit. About the same time, another Benedictine, named Baldwin, was called from the same school to be abbot of the newly-established monastery at Lisborn. His inauguration took place in 1130, and he held the office until 1161, when he was succeeded by Franco. From this circumstance, and from the fact of the poem containing internal evidence of its having been written in North Flanders, we may reasonably conclude that its author was a countryman of Walter and Baldwin, that is to say a Fleming, and probably an ecclesiastic attached to the monastery of Saint Peter at Ghent.

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* "Nomine vel numero unus erat, sed nullus eorum,
Vivendi studiis et pietate manus,
Quo super Egmundi fratres abbate beatos
Jus viget, augescit census, abundat honor."
Reinardus, lib. iii. l. 1501, et seq.

The writer, whoever he was,* was undoubtedly a churchman; this is shown not only by his learning, all of which was at that time in the hands of the Church, but also by the monkish spirit which pervades the third fable of the third book. The fact of his indulging in bitter derision upon the downfall of the Church, and sparing neither the supreme head of it, nor St. Bernard, whose fame then echoed throughout Europe, does not at all militate against this opinion; for, at the period when he wrote, the divided state of parties would fully account for such an expression of opinion. The author of the Reinardus was, however, no freethinking scorner, but a man who honoured the clergy when their conduct justified him in doing so, as his praise of Walter and Baldwin sufficiently attest;—his calling them his friends and confidants affording additional evidence of his connexion with the Church. If, too, as has been surmised, he was a Benedictine, rigidly observant of the ancient rules of the order, and, as such, one to whom the rapidly-extending innovations of the Cistercian monks could not but be highly objectional, his vehement opposition to Saint Bernard, who was the head of the Cistercians, and to the Crusades, to the promotion of which that distinguished prelate had lent all his influence, is easily accounted for. When we add, that the work contains

* His name was probably Nivardus; for a MS. in the Royal Library at Berlin, which is supposed to be of the fourteenth century, contains some extracts from this poem, with the rubric *Magister Nivardus de Isengrino et Reinardo.*

allusions to an inundation in Friesland which happened on the 9th January 1164,* and to the ill success of the second Crusade,† we think we shall have proved very satisfactorily that the poem in question is a production of the twelfth century.‡

Having done so, it seems almost a work of supererogation to overthrow the theory recently advanced by Mone, of its containing an allegorical version of the history of Zwentibold; for the idea of composing a work of such a nature would hardly suggest itself three centuries after those events had occurred which were to form the subject-matter of the allegory. Eccard was the first to broach the theory of the historical origin of Reynard's story, in his preface to Leibnitz's Collectanea Etymologica, and he imagined Isengrimus to represent a certain Bavarian count, named *Isanricus*, who at a somewhat later period, opposed the Emperor Arnulf, in Bavaria, Austria, and Moravia. Unfortunately for Eccard's case, although in the fable the wolf and the fox are continually coming in contact one with the other, history not only does not afford a single instance of Reginarius and Isanricus being connected in the slightest degree; but, which is still

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* "Prodigia refero, quod Fresia tota fatetur."—lib. iv. 1185.

† See lib. iv. v. 1221 et seq.

‡ See further Grimm, *Reinhart Fuchs*, s. lxx-cii; and Du Meril, *Poésies Populaires Latines*, p. 25. Raynouard, on the other hand, looked upon it as being of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. See his review of the work in the *Journal des Savants*, July 1834.

worse, lays the scenes of their adventures in widely different places. Mone, in editing Reinardus, adopts Eccard's theory with certain amendments, such as making King Zwentibold the original of the wolf, instead of the above-mentioned Isanricus, and seeing in the name of the lion, Rufanus, an anagram of that of King Arnulf (*Arnufus*),* and many other things equally curious and equally imperceptible to commonplace people like ourselves, who do not pretend to be able to see further into a millstone than our neighbours. But history treats the editor of "Reinardus" as scurvily as it had before treated the editor of Leibnitz. It demolishes his nicely balanced theory. Its records prove the characters of Zwentibold and Reginarius to have borne no resemblance to those which the wolf and the fox exhibit in the poem; and, what alone is quite sufficient to decide the question against Mone, represent Reginarius as the subject of Zwentibold, whereas, in "Reinardus," the fox is ever free and independent of the wolf.

§ XII. But it is time to give our readers some notion of the poem which has called forth these remarks. It is divided into four books; and, from the manner in which it opens, Isengrimus being named without any explanation on the part of the author that the wolf is thereby intended, and no reason being given for be-

* "At some future time," says Grimm, "a much better anagram may satisfy the world that *Méon*, the editor of the '*Renard*,' and *Mone*, the editor of the '*Reinardus*,' were identically one and the same person."

stowing the epithet of Reynard upon the fox, it is obviously either the continuation of some other poem, or a new branch of one, which was, at the time when this was written, already popular. It commences as follows:—

"At early dawn, one summer's morn, as Isengrimus hied
Unto the wood in search of food, Reinardus he espied;
Who thither brought by selfsame thought, by which the wolf had been,
Had hoped that he the wolf should see, before himself was seen.
But finding straight, although too late, he was in piteous case,
Cut off from flight, the cunning wight put on a good bold face;
And willingly, so feigned he, he was the first to speak—
'O quick be thine, dear uncle mine, the prey which now you seek.'
He called him so, yet well did know that uncle he was none,
But thought wolf ne'er would wish or dare to slay a brother's son.
'Rejoice, thy prayer is heard, I swear,' quoth Isengrimus grave,
'The present hour puts in my power the food for which I crave:
Thou pray'dst that I might quick descry some fitting prey for me;
Food to my mind in thee I find, so thou that prey shalt be.'"*

* "Egrediens silvam mane Isengrimus, ut escam
Jejunis natis quæreret atque sibi,
Cernit ab obliquo Reinardum currere vulpem,
Qui simili studio ductus agebat iter;
Prævisusque lupo, non viderat ante videntem,
Quam nimis admoto perdidit hoste fugam.
Ille, ubi cassa fuga est, ruit in discrimina casus,
Nil melius credens quam simulare fidem.
Jamque, salutator veluti spontaneus, infit:
'Contingat patruo præda cupita meo!'
(Dicebat patruum falso Reinardus, ut ille
Tanquam cognato crederet usque suo.)

Reynard objects to his uncle's proposal that he should travel after the fashion of the prophet (Jonas), that is to say, in his bowels,

> "equitabis more prophetæ
> Non tibi sella super dorsa, sed intus erit."

and while they are arguing the point, which they do at considerable length, a peasant passes along carrying a ham. Reynard makes his uncle a proposal that they should rob the peasant; his uncle agrees to do so; and accordingly Reynard approaches him, feigns lameness, and allows himself to be hunted by the countryman, who, that he may the more readily make him his prize, throws down the ham. This is speedily snapped up by Isengrim, who had been on the look-out for it, and carried off to the forest; where the wolf is soon after joined by Reynard, who demands his share of the prize, whereupon Isengrim gives him the string by which the ham had been carried.

Reynard afterwards induces Isengrim to accompany him to a store pond, where he will be able to catch abundance of fish. Reynard tells him if he dips his tail in the water, and allows it to hang there a sufficient time, he will be rewarded by an ample prey; and, advising him to catch only eels and perch, and not to bother himself about the larger fish, leaves him and robs the priest's hen-roost of a cock. The priest

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'Contigit,' Isengrimus ait, 'lætare petisse,
Opportuna tuas obtulit hora preces;
Ut quæsita mihi contingat præda petisti,
Contigit, in prædam te exigo, tuque daris.'"—l. 1-16.

upon being made acquainted with the robbery, leaves off saying mass, and gives chase to the fox, accompanied by his congregation, who arm themselves with the crucifix, candlesticks, &c. Reynard, finding the pursuit growing hot, betakes himself to the spot where the wolf is kept prisoner by his tail being frozen fast in the ice. Reynard advises him to escape, and leaves him to the tender mercies of the priest and his companions. They fall upon him, tooth and nail, with the sacred weapons which they had seized. Amongst the most active is Andrada, the priest's wife, who, intending to kill Isengrim, aims a violent blow at him with a hatchet. By great good luck however the blow only cuts off part of his tail, so that he is thereby enabled to escape and reach the forest, where he vows to be bitterly revenged upon Reynard.

The fox soon after joins him, and endeavours to convince his uncle that his loss is really a gain; but offers, by way of making amends for his supposed ill conduct, to point out to him four rams whom he may readily capture. He does so; and Isengrim begins by demanding from them the tribute of hides and wool, which their fathers had been accustomed to pay him. They deny his right to such tribute, and form an effectual plan of resistance, for they all four attack him at once from the different sides of the field, in the middle of which he happens to be standing, and he falls to the ground half killed by the blows given him by the very animals in anticipation of whose capture he had exclaimed—

"As knives cut butter, will my teeth their bones."

The second book contains the history of the lion's falling sick; and includes the first portion of the earlier "Isengrimus;" the conclusion of which poem, with sundry alterations and additions, constitutes, according to its present arrangement, the third book of "Reinardus." That what is now termed the fourth book ought, at all events, to be placed directly after the second, is shown from its commencement, in which we are told "that, the court being greatly rejoiced at the lion's restoration to health, the several members return to their respective homes: and that on his way through the forest Reynard encounters the wolf, who is still smarting under the loss of his skin—an explanation which shows very clearly that the third book, in which the wolf and the fox repeatedly encounter each other without the slightest allusion being made to this particular injury, is very improperly thrust into the place which it now occupies. But to proceed, Reynard, after a long discourse with Isengrim, persuades him to wreak his vengeance upon the ram. The wolf agrees to do so, and is accordingly conducted by Reynard to the spot where he is feeding. The ram succeeds, however, in beating off his assailant, who is glad to escape with no worse treatment than a hearty drubbing. When the wolf is somewhat recovered from the wounds inflicted on this occasion, Reynard determines to play him another trick, and accordingly invites the

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* "Ut butyrum culter dentibus ossa seco."—v. 1464.

lion, whom he meets and who is desperately hungry, to visit Isengrim. The lion does so, to Isengrim's great astonishment, and the whole party proceed together to the forest, where they have the good-fortune to capture a young heifer, which Isengrim is commanded by the lion to divide. He commences by separating the spoil into three equal portions—intending one for the lion, one for himself, and one for the fox. The king of beasts is, however, sore displeased with the wolf's manner of sharing the spoil, and calls upon the fox to divide afresh. Reynard divides it into three shares, certainly of equal size, but of very different degrees of value, the first share contained the very choicest parts of the heifer, and was in fact worth the other two put together; the second share contained a good deal of meat but no fat;

"The third all bones, but little flesh was there."*

Lastly he then takes the feet of the heifer, adds one of them to each of the three shares, and lays the fourth on one side. Being then called upon by the lion to allot the several shares to the parties for whom he intended them, he says—the first is for his royal master, the second for the lioness, and the third for the lion's whelps. The lion inquires what is to be done with the fourth foot. "It is for me, or to be added to your majesty's share," replies the fox;

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* "Est ossosa parum tertia carnis habens."—4. v. 258.

whereupon he is graciously permitted to retain it, as a reward for the skill which he had displayed in effecting so equitable a division; a skill which he professes,—in reply to the inquiry of the lion, who had taught him to divide so well,—to have acquired from Isengrim.

"Me docuit . . . patruus iste meus."*

Our limits admonish us to bring our notice of this poem to a close. We must therefore pass over Isen-

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* Mone says that in this part of the poem the lion no longer represents the emperor Arnulph, but his son Lewis of Germany, and that the division of the heifer is intended to typify the partition of Lorraine. Unfortunately for this statement, the story is one of the commonest middle age fables. In a MS. of the latter end of the thirteenth century, containing a collection of Latin stories for the use of the monks, among the additional MSS. in the British Museum, which was assuredly compiled in England, we find a similar story, told so smartly and so briefly, as to justify our adding it to this note.

"Leo, lupus, et vulpes, venantes, ceperunt vacam, ovem, et aucam; et cum hora fuisset partiendi, dixit Leo, 'Luppe (*sic*), partire predam nostram.' Lupus dixit, 'Quia tu es rex noster et dominus, tu habebis vacam; ego, quia minor te sed major vulpe, habebo ovem; vulpes vero habebit aucam.' Leo autem hoc audiens, protenso pede, pellem de capite lupi unguibus extrahit et caput totum fecerat cruentatum. Dixit vulpi, 'Vulpes nunc partire tu.' Dixit vulpes, 'Domine, quia tu es dominus et rex, tu habebis vacam; et domina mea leona, uxor tua, habebit ovem; et domini mei, pueri tui, habebunt aucam.' Cui leo—'Dic mihi vulpes, quis te docuit sapienter partiri?' Ad quem vulpes—'Domine, iste socius meus cum rubeo capite'—ostenso lupo."

grim's perjury, and its punishment, together with the particulars of his death, from an attack made on him by a herd of swine, and of his being partly devoured by the old sow. One short extract and we have done. Reynard is told that his uncle Isengrim will never sin more:—

"No wicked schemes now form his dreams, his mind no treasons fill,
He never more, will as of yore, do aught that's wrong or ill.
'Then sure he's dead,' sly Renard said; 'dear uncle art thou gone?
Alas! I'm here, oh uncle dear, thou in thy tomb, alone!"*

§ XIII. We now come to the oldest High German poem on the subject of Reynard. Unfortunately this has not been handed down to us in its earliest shape, with the exception of a small fragment from a manuscript of the end of the twelfth or commencement of the thirteenth century, discovered in the year 1839, in the vellum binding of an old account book. A slight examination of this relic, which is preserved in the library at Cassel, at once satisfied Grimm that it was a portion of Reinhart, as originally written; and he announced his discovery and printed the fragment itself, in a letter which he addressed to his learned and zealous fellow labourer in

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* "'Desiit esse malus, mores projecit iniquos,
Nil sceleris faciet postmodo, nilque doli.'
'Ergo obiit certe? proh, patrue dulcis, obisti?
Heu, tumulum sine me, patrue care tenes?'"—iv. 1073-6.

early German literature and philology, the distinguished editor of the *Nibelungen*, Karl Lackmann.*

Interesting as this fragment is, in a philological point of view, it seems better for the present purpose, to content ourselves with the somewhat modernized version first printed in 1817, and again by Grimm, from a different manuscript, but collated with such printed text.†

"Reinhart," the poem in question, contains no fewer than 2266 lines; in the course of which the author twice names himself *Heinreîch der Glîchesære* according to the one MS.—*Glîchsenære* according to the other. This last is not properly a family name, but rather to be considered a characteristic one, signifying a counterfeiter or feigner (from the old German *gelichesen*) and corresponding with the modern German *Gleissner*, a dissembler. Grimm,—and his opinion on matters connected with the early literature of his fatherland, has all the force of a law—concludes from various circumstances that the author was a Suabian, living in German Switzerland, who flourished about the middle, or rather towards the latter half of the twelfth century. His work, however, has been handed down to us only in the shape into which it was fashioned by an unknown writer, who lived some fifty years later than Heinrich; in whose version we find

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* *Sendschreiben an Karl Lachmann, von Jacob Grimm. Ueber Reinhart Fuchs*, 8vo. Leipsic, 1840.

† *Reinhart Fuchs*, s. ciii.-cxv. und s. 25-114.

that a considerable number of verses have been suppressed, altered, and introduced; but in which the cramping metrical laws of the elder poet are preserved in a most remarkable manner. The contents of Heinrich's poem contribute remarkably towards the earlier history of these fables; for it must have been from the French sources, although not to be found in any of those now known to exist, that he was enabled to mention, not only Salerno, but the name of the physician of that place. Master *Pendîn* or *Bendîn* is no imaginary person, but Magister Pontus, a Greek, who is recorded as one of the first founders of the school. On the other hand, the elephant's being invested with Bohemia must have been the work of *Heinrich der Glichsenære* himself, for it is little likely such an incident should be mentioned by the French authorities.

We shall not attempt to give an outline of the whole story contained in the "Reinhart;" but, as one of its peculiarities consists in its being the only work which tells how the sickness of the lion was occasioned, we purpose confining ourselves to such portion of it; and thereby completing that chapter of Reynard's History, of which our notice of "Isengrimus" and "Reinardus" have already furnished some particulars.

The lion proclaimed a general peace, but, the ants having refused to recognize him as their sovereign, he trod down their hillocks, killing thousands of this tiny race, and wounding as many. The lord of the ants was absent when this outrage was committed, but

on his return vowed to take bitter vengeance for the injury done to his people:

"So spake their chief; then hunted round,
After the lion, whom he found
Under the linden fast asleep.
Close to him the ant did creep,
With an angry spirit fraught;
'Lord God of the Good,' he thought,
'How shall I my serfs avenge?'
* * * *
After thinking many things,
Right into his ear he springs."*

The pain which he caused the lion was so intense, and so little capable of being relieved, that he looked upon it as a judgment of heaven for neglecting his duties as a king and judge. A court is therefore summoned, at which Isengrim complains against Reynard, and the cock and hen bring in upon a bier the dead body of their daughter, whom the fox had bitten to death; at which misdeed the king becomes so enraged that he frightens the poor hare into a fever. The dead pullet is buried with all fitting solemnity;

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* "Sprach in hêrre, und huop sich sâ ze hant
Nâch dem Lewen, biz daz er in vant
Under einer linden, dâ er slief.
Der ameise zuo im lief
Mit eime grimmigen muote,
Er gedâhte 'herre got der guote,
Wie sol ich rechen mine diet?'
* * * *
Er hâte manegen gedanc
Mit kraft erm in das ôre spranc."—v. 1291-1300.

and the hare, having laid himself down to sleep upon her grave, awakes quite recovered from his fever, which being looked upon as a miracle, the pullet is pronounced a saint.

Messengers are now sent to summon the fox to court; who, regardless of their authority, plays them sundry scurvy tricks. At last his friend the badger goes to him, and Reynard promises him to appear before the king. He does so, and tells his majesty he has brought him a remedy from Master Pendin, the physician of Salerno, after taking which he must sweat himself in a wolf's hide, and wear a bear's skin, and a cat's-skin hat. These are speedily procured from Reynard's enemies. Reynard next asks for food, and names a fowl and a piece of boar's flesh. The poor hen, Pinto, who had complained against him, is instantly killed, and a steak is as quickly cut from the haunches of the boar who had supported her cause. In the mean time, the king takes a bath, wraps himself in a wolf's hide, throws the bear's skin over him, and puts on his cat's-skin hat. The warmth of this last draws out the ant, who creeps from the lion's head into the fur. The physician lets the sun shine upon the hat, and thereby discovers the little animal which had occasioned all the king's sufferings. He is violently incensed against the ant, who at length obtains forgiveness, by promising the fox dominion over a thousand castles. Meanwhile, the king having recovered, Reynard, who has already been revenged of his enemies, knavishly seeks to reward his friends, the

elephant and the camel, with gifts which carry with them infinite vexation. The king, at Reynard's solicitation, bestows upon the elephant the country of Bohemia, where he gets most piteously maltreated. The camel receives a nunnery, but when she goes to take possession of it, the nuns rise up with one accord and beat her out of the place. At length Reynard having given the lion poison, he and the badger beat a retreat. By the time the fox had reached his castle, the king had grown seriously ill, and, owing to the distance of the much-desired physician, a fatal result was expected. Eventually the poison does its work, and the royal Lion dies lamented by all his subjects, who threaten vengeance against the traitor Reynard.

§ XIV. If the story of Reynard had its origin, as it undoubtedly had, among the Germans, with whom it has moreover to this day preserved its popularity, undiminished either by the influence of time, or the changes of literary taste; still, if we would point out the soil on which, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it was most assiduously cultivated, and most abundantly fruitful, we must place our finger on the north of France. In the Norman French poems, we find many rich and pure streams of this dearly-prized romance: in number and extent, although the oldest of them are not preserved, they far exceed all the other works to which the story of the fox has given rise.

Méon has, therefore, done good service to middle age literature by the publication of "Le Roman de Re-

nart;"* and M. Chabaille, his successor, has added considerably to the value of Méon's publication, by the supplementary volume to that work which he has given to the public.†

The "Roman du Renart" which Méon has published, contains no less than 30,362 lines; and if to these we add "Le Couronnemens Renart," and "Renart le Nouvel," which are contained in the fourth volume of his collection, this number will be increased to 41,748. Our readers will see, therefore, that any attempt to epitomize this work would be totally incompatible with the space which we could apply to that purpose. Nay more, we could hardly hope to give them a satisfactory analysis of one of the twenty-seven 'branches,' or divisions, of which it consists. These branches, it must be understood, do not, like the several adventures of the Reinardus, form one general and perfect whole; on the contrary, they are frequently directly the opposite of one another, which is never the case with the stories in the Latin and Dutch poems.

Gervinus, one of the most distinguished of the living critics of Germany,‡ shows that this was a necessary result from the spirit which prevailed in French

* *Le Roman du Renart, publié d'après les Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi, des XIII, XIV, et XV Siècles, par M. D. M. Méon.* Paris, 8vo. 1824. Tomes 4.

† *Le Roman du Renart, Supplément, Variantes et Corrections, publié d'après les MSS. de la Bibliothèque du Roi, et de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, par P. Chabaille.* Paris, 8vo. 1835.

‡ *Geschichte der Poetischen National—Literatur der Deutschen.* (B. i. s. 443, et seq.)

poetry at the time these 'branches' were composed, when the short, joyous Fabliaux of the Trouvères were received with such general satisfaction; and he even ventures to express his disbelief (p. 455), that a Frenchman could have written so complete and sustained a work as the Reinaert,—"Nie glaube ich dass ein Franzose etwas du Art machen Könne." This declaration is, on the other hand, treated very contemptuously by Edelstand du Meril,* who argues that as the names of many of the actors in the fable, as Chanticleer the cock, Cuwart the leopard, Firapel, the leopard, have no signification except in France, the fable must have assumed its popular form in that country.

Another distinction between the two classes of works may here be pointed out. The wolf and his injuries form the main action of the Latin and Germanic works; while, on the contrary, in the French poems, taken as a body, the fox always appears, and that very justly, as the chief actor; although there is frequently not only no connexion between the several histories, but oftentimes positive contradictions. The object of the more recent writers, again, appears to have been, to represent the other animals as obtaining the advantage over the fox, while he at the same time gets the upper hand of the wolf. In the Latin poem the cock is the only animal by whom Reynard is outwitted, but in the French works he is so by the raven, the cat, and the sparrow.

It is most likely that the greater part of these French

* *Poésies Populaires Latines*, p. 205-6.

stories, and, besides these, many others similar to them, were generally current among the common people; and only required to be adopted and put into rhyme by the poets. Many that were formerly in existence have been lost, such as the story of the ant, that of the death of the lion, and many others which now exist in other forms, but not in the old French, from which they are known to have been derived.

Pierre de St. Cloot is considered to be author of the oldest existing branches of "Le Roman du Renart." He likewise wrote Le Testament d'Alexandre, a part of the great romance on the subject of Alexander, and flourished about the beginning of the thirteenth century. Pierre, who refers to a book as his authority for what he relates—

> "Que se li livres nos dit voir,
> Ou je trove l'estoire escrite"—v. 4938-9.

avows himself as the historian of Reynard, both at the beginning and at the end of the seventh branch of Méon's collection; which is certainly one of the earliest but not one of the best told divisions of the work. The branch in question commences:—

> "Pierre who was born at St. Cloot,
> Has taken pains and trouble too,
> Prompted by his friends' intreaty,
> In verse as best he may to greet ye,
> With a merry jest and wile
> Of Renard, who is full of guile."*

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* "Pierres qui de Saint Clost fut nez,
S'est tant traveillez et penez,

Whether Legrand d'Aussy and Raynouard have any grounds for also attributing to Pierre the first, second, and third branches, appears extremely problematical, inasmuch as the affair with the cock, related in the seventh branch, is told likewise, but in an inferior manner, in the third. That he was the author of other portions of the work may reasonably be concluded from a passage in a later writer, who charges him with leaving out the best parts of his subject:—

> "Perroz, who plied his wit and art
> To tell in verse tales of Renart,
> And of Isengrim so stout—
> The best part of his tale left out."*

From which it appears that we are certainly acquainted with the name of one of the least important authors of "Renard;" and know nothing as to who was the author of the most remarkable parts; to say nothing of those oldest branches which seem to have perished, or which at least have not yet been discovered The German *Heinrich der Glichsenære* preceded Pierre by twenty or thirty years at least, and he alludes to French poems which must have appeared soon after the middle of

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> Par proiere de ses amis,
> Que il nos a en rime mis
> Une risee et un gabet
> De Renart, qui tant set d'abet."—v. 4851-6.

* "Perroz qui son engin et s'art
Mist en vers fere de Renart.
Et d'Ysengrim son chier conpere,
Lessa le miez de sa matere."—v. 9649-50.

the eleventh century; in fact there is no doubt that, at the time when the Latin works were written, there existed compositions in the French language on the subjects of Reynard and Isengrim, the loss of which is greatly to be lamented.* It ought to be added that two other writers of later date than Pierre avow themselves authors of parts of these poems—Robert de Lison as the author of the twenty-third, and a "Prestre de la Croix en Brie" of the twentieth branch.

§ xv. But it is time to refer to what has been produced in Flanders, on the subject of our hero, and in doing so we have a pleasant duty to perform, inasmuch as we shall be instrumental in awakening public attention to a poet whose extraordinary merits have been hitherto, through the influence of fortuitous circumstances, entirely overlooked; the credit due to his skill and ability having been bestowed upon a later writer, who was in fact little more than a translator. We allude to the clever author of the Flemish poem entitled, "Reinart," which was originally published by Gräter in 1817, afterwards reprinted by Grimm, and

* It is not too much to expect that some of these earlier French poems on the subject of Reynard may yet come to light. If lost, they were probably in existence up to a later period than is generally supposed; some of them being perhaps contained in one or other of the numerous MSS. of "Renart," mentioned in Van Praet's catalogue of the Ancient Library of the Louvre, *Inventaire de l'ancienne Bibliothèque du Louvre, fait en l'Année* 1373, *par Gilles Mallett, Garde de la dite Bibliothèque, &c.* 8vo. Paris, 1836.

since more fully edited by Willems, from the manuscript purchased by the Belgian Government at Heber's sale.*

The name of this heretofore disregarded votary of the Muses, appears from the first line of this poem to have been *Willem:*

"*Willem* die vele boeke maecte,"

says the Comburgh MS., the only one which has yet been printed. The Amsterdam MS. on the other hand, has—

"*Willem die Madock* maecte,"

from which it has been supposed that his name was *Willem die Matoc* (from the old Flemish *Mate*, *socius*, likewise *pauper*, *miser*, with the diminutive *oc*, therefore *sociolus*, or pauperculus); a piece of knowledge which serves to explain the hitherto unintelligible passage at the termination of Jacob van Mearlant's Reimbibel.

"Want nit nes niet *Matoc's* drom
No *Reinaert's*, no Artur's boerder."

"*Willam die Matoc*," says Grimm, "must without doubt be looked upon as the author of 'Reinaert.' It is most probable, that he was an earlier poet than Maerlant, and not merely a contemporary: I believe he must be placed soon after the year 1250."

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* *Reinaert de Vos, Episch Fabeldicht van de twaelfde en dertiende Eeuw, met Anmerkingen en Opheldering von J. F. Willems.* Gent. 8vo. 1836.

The accuracy of Grimm's opinion is however doubted by Willems, who asserts that *Willem van Utenhoven* was the real author: adding, that *Madoc* was not the author, for that the name of such a writer cannot be found—that, in the passage where *Madoc* occurs, it cannot be the name of a man, and merely designates a poem; and lastly, that the article *de* is never used before the Dutch proper names. These objections are not, however, conclusive. The argument that *Madoc* cannot be the name of the writer, because no poet of that name is known, applies as directly against its being the title of a poem; for no poem so designated has been handed down to us. And, with regard to the article *de* never being used before Dutch proper names, we can only say that, in Hoffmann von Fallersleben's History of Flemish Poetry, mention is made of Jan *de* Clerc, Niclaes *de* Clerc, Andreas *de* Smit, and Jan *de* Weert van Ijpre.*

Be the author of the Flemish "Reinaert" Willem van Utenhoven, or Willem die Matoc, a point which further investigation can alone decide, his work, which contains 3474 verses, is one displaying considerable genius and spirit, and may justly claim the merit of exhibiting a number of the most pleasing and spirited adventures in Reynard's history, skilfully worked up into one connected, well arranged, and perfect whole, as the reader will readily admit when told that it

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* *Hoffman's Horæ Belgicæ*, part 1, p. 21, &c.

corresponds with the first twenty chapters of the present reprint. Willem, who states his work to have been undertaken at the solicitation of a lady, whose name however he does not specify, confessedly employed for his purpose French materials, such certainly as have not come down to us, but which were no doubt current, at the time he wrote, in French Flanders and Artois, whence he could have little difficulty in procuring them. But, whatever those materials may have been, the manner in which he has employed them justifies to the fullest his claim to the character of a skilful and successful writer. In his work, the history of Reynard is told in light and agreeable language; the narrative is well sustained, there is nothing omitted, nothing unnecessarily introduced, but the incidents appear to spring naturally one from another, and the interest which we feel at the opening of the poem keeps gradually increasing as we approach its termination.

To this poem of Willem's, a continuation (consisting of upwards of four thousand verses, and of which a fragment comprising one thousand and thirty-eight lines was first printed by Grimm) was subsequently added by some writer whose name is entirely unknown. The effect of this addition, which relates a number of adventures of very different degrees of interest, told too in a very inferior style, tends, as may readily be conceived, to weaken the impression produced by Willem's well-contrived history. Nevertheless, the two works appear to have been very early regarded as only

one. The transcribers probably united them as a matter of course; and after the invention of printing they were both, to the entire suppression of Matoc's fame and name, reduced into prose: and the story on its appearance in this form was received with such universal favour, that in a short time the older poems from which it was derived were entirely forgotten. It is not known who was the adapter of this prose version, the first edition of which was published at Gouda, by Gheraert Leeu, in 1470, under the title of *Die Historie van Reinaert die Vos*, with the following colophon on the recto of fol. cx. "*Heir eyndet die hystorie van Reynaert die Vos ende is gheprent ter goude in hollant by mi gheraert leeu den seuentienden dach in augusto Int iaer* M.CCCC *en* LXXIX *Deo Gratias.*" This edition is of extreme rarity, only two copies being known—one at the Hague, the other in the matchless library of the Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, and for the use of which the editor of this reprint is indebted to the liberality of that distinguished collector. This prose version was again printed at Gouda in 1485, and again in 1783 in 12mo. at Lubeck and Leipsic, under the editorship of Ludweg Suhl, "Stadts-bibliothekar in Lubeck." At the close of this introduction, the reader will find the opening chapter of Gerard Leeu's version, which I have thought it right to give, not only as an extract from a volume of extreme rarity, but as furnishing the curious enquirer into the affinity which exists between our language and the Flemish, with the means

of comparing Caxton's version with that from which he translated.* To this, for similar reasons, has also been added the parallel passage in the original metrical version.†

§ xvi. Before we proceed to the history of the Reynardine fables existing in English literature, to which this mention of Gerard Leeu's and Caxton's versions naturally lead, it will be necessary to refer to that version of Reynard's story to which we have already alluded, as one which, through its borrowed charms, has for a long time usurped a place in public estimation to which its own merits by no means entitle it.

This is the Low German Reineke de Fos attributed by some to Heinrich van Alkmar, "Schulmeister und Zuchtlehrer des herzogs von Lothrigen," and by others to Nicolaus Baumann, who having fallen into disgrace at the court of the Duke of Julick, afterwards entered into the service of Duke Magnus of Mecklenburgh and died at Rostock in 1526. The former opinion is maintained by Gottsched,‡ Scheltema,§ and Schel-

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* Appendix, No. II.

† Appendix, No. III.

‡ *Heinrichs von Alkmar Reineke der Fuchs mit schonen Kupfern, nach der Ausgabe von* 1498 *ins Hochdeutsche ubersetz von J. C. Gottsched.* Leipsic und Amsterdam, 1752, sm. folio. The plates of this edition are by Albert van Elverdingen, and are the same which grace the *Pleasant History of Reynard the Fox*, lately issued by Felix Summerly.

§ *Reintje de Vos van Heindrick van Alkmaar door Jacobus Schel-*

ler.* The latter by Grimm† and Hoffman von Tallersleben.‡

These unsettled claims to the authorship of the Low German "Reineke" have proved a fruitful source of literary controversy, but need not now detain us. The work itself certainly created a great sensation. Much has formerly been written about it; more we venture to predict than ever will be again. The bringing to light of the Flemish Reinaert will assuredly pluck it from the throne which it has so long and so unjustly occupied. Yet it cannot be denied that Reynard's fame has been greatly extended by means of this version, which has been looked up to for centuries, as by far the most important production to which his history has given rise. The most popular it assuredly has been, as is shown not only by the innumerable editions of it which have from time to time appeared, but also from the various translations which it has undergone.

The bibliographical history of the Reineke and the translations of it, would alone occupy a small volume. Such therefore it would be useless to attempt in this

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tema. Haerlem, 1826, 8vo. This contains the Low German text with a Dutch translation by Scheltema.

* *Reineke de Fos fan Hinrek fan Alkmar upt nye utgegeven unde forklared dorg Dr. K. F. A. Scheller.* Brunswick, 1825, 8vo.

† *Grimm. Reinhart Fuchs*, s. clxvi. et seq.

‡ *Reineke Vos. Nach der Lübecker Ausgabe vom Jahre* 1498 *mit einleitung, glossar und anmerkungen von Hoffman von Fallersleben.* Breslau, 1834, 8vo.

place; but as this introduction would be very incomplete without some few details upon this point, we will at once proceed to furnish them.

§ xvii. The first edition of Reynke de Vos, was printed at Lubeck in 1498, in quarto, with woodcuts. Of this edition but one copy is known, and that is in the library at Wolfenbuttel. It next appeared at Rostock, in 1522, in 4to. with wood-cuts, printed for L. Dietz, and under the editorship of Nicolaus Baumann, and with the preface, in which the real, or pretended author declares himself as "Ich Hinrèk van Alckmer." This same L. Dietz printed four other editions in 4to., viz. in 1539, 1543, 1549, and 1553, under the title "Reynke de Voss de olde nyge gedrucket mit sidlickem vorstande und schonen figuren, erluchtet unde vorbetert."

An edition in 4to., under a similar title, was published at Francfort am Mayn, by Cyriac Jacobs, in 1550, and during that and the following century, numerous other editions appeared from time to time.

The next edition, in point of importance, if not with reference to its date, was that published by Hackmann—Reineke de Vos, met dem Koker. Verlegt van Frytag, Boeckhandler in Wulffenbuttel, 1711, 4to., and which was, till of late years, one of the rarest books belonging to this class. Hackmann, who was professor at Helmstadt, in an academical exercise, dated 1st November, 1709, contended that Baumann was not the author of Reinike, but Heinrich van Alkman; adducing in confirmation of this opinion, the Lubeck edition of 1498, which he regarded as the

first, and of which no one had previously heard. In 1711 he reprinted the poem from the Lubeck edition, taking such care not to mention where the copy of it was to be found, that it was not ascertained until 1753, when Gottsched discovered it in the library at Wolfenbuttel. To his edition Hackmann has prefixed a 'Vorrede an den aprichtigen Nedersachsischen Leser,' and the Latin academical dissertation before referred to.*

Since Hackmann's edition—the only ones deserving of notice are those which have appeared under the editorship of Bredow,† Scheller, and Hoffmann von Fallersleben—the last, which is accompanied by an excellent glossary, and valuable notes, being by far the best and most useful. It is from Hoffman's edition that the specimen of the Low German Reineke, which follows this introduction, has been derived.‡

§ XVIII. But it is time to refer to the numerous translations of this version, to which we have already alluded as contributing so greatly to the wide-spread

* This dissertation contains numerous particulars respecting the history of the Reynardine romances generally; and I have a curious analysis of it by my late learned friend Mr. Douce, to whom I lent my copy of Hackmann's edition. Hackmann tells us, among other things, that Luther, to whom he gives a Greek appellation (Megalander) was extravagantly fond of Æsop's fables, which were never out of his hand.

† *Reineke de Vos, mit einer Verklarung der olde sassischen worde*, Eutin, 8vo. 1798. For the titles of the editions of Scheller and Hoffmann, see notes, p. lxv.

‡ Appendix, No. IV.

popularity of Reynard's history. And first of the translation of it into High German. This appeared in 1545, under the title of "*Reiniken Fuchs, Das Ander Teyl des buchs Schimpff und Ernst, welches mit weniger Kurtzweiliger, den Centum Novella, Esopus, Eulenspiegel, Alte Weisen, Weise Meyster, und alle andere Kurtzweilige bucher, aber zu lernen weissheit und verstand, weit nutzlicher und besserer, wie aus der Vorrede zu vernemen ist. Gedruckt zu Frankfort am Mayn bey Cyriaco Jacobi zum Bart.*" 1545, fol. The translator of this High German version says, in his preface, that he has not announced his name, because he did not undertake the task for the sake of renown, but for the benefit of himself and others. But Schopper, in the dedication of his Latin translation to the Emperor Maximilian II, tells us his name was Beuther.

> "Quos puto Saxonico *Beutherus* more loquentes
> Germano jussit cultius ore loqui."

And we learn from Floegel and Grimm that he was no other than Michael Beuther, the friend and pupil of Luther and Melancthon, and who filled the post of Professor of History at Strasburgh, where he died in 1587. Of this translation, of which a specimen will be found at the end of this introduction,* no less than ten editions are known to have appeared before the year 1617, although it is spoken of by Grimm as a work of very inferior execution.

Another translation into the same language appeared

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* See Appendix, No. V.

at Rostock, in 1650, in 8vo. under the title, *Reinike Fuchs &ca auff dass neue mit allerhand jetziger zeit ublichen reim-arten ausgezieret, mit etzlichen hundert versen bereichert, mit unterscheidlichen sitten und lelh-satzen verbessert.* A second edition appeared in 1662, and a third in the following year. It was from this version that the prose history was compiled, which under the title, *Der listige Reinike Fuchs, das ist ein sehr nutzliches lust-und sinn-reiches Buchlein*, has been for so many years one of the favorite chap-books of the German people.

In 1752, appeared Gottsched's translation—the title of which we have already given (see note, p. lxiv), and in 1794 Goethe's noble versification of it, in twelve songs, and in stately hexameters, which Mr. Carlyle has characteristically described as being, "for poetical use infinitely the best; like some copy of an ancient bedimmed, half-obliterated wood-cut, but new done on steel, on India paper, and with all manner of graceful and appropriate appendages."*

Other translations into the High German have since appeared, of which it will here suffice to mention that of D. W. Soltau, first published at Berlin, in 1803, and secondly at Brunswick, in 1823. The same author, some years since, gave to the world a translation of Reynard into English doggrel verse.

In 1554, there appeared a Danish translation, under

* Goethe's poem was afterwards translated into Danish by the illustrious Oehlenschlager, whose version was published at Copenhagen in 1806.

the title *En Raffuebog som kaldes paa tyske Reinike Foss, nu nylige fordanskit aff Hermann Weigere.* This edition, which is in 4to., was published at Lubeck; a second appeared at Copenhagen in 1656; and a third, revised and amended, at the same place, in 8vo., in 1747.

From the Danish, it was translated into Swedish rhyme, and published at Stockholm, in 8vo., in 1621, under the title *Reyncke Foss, thet ar en skön och nyttigh dicht.* This was followed by a prose version entitled *Reinick Fuchs eller michel râf 3 uplagan. Stockholm,* 1775, in 8vo.

It is also said to have been translated into Icelandic, but it does not appear that any version of it in that language has ever been printed.

§ xix. We now come to the Latin version by Hartmann Schopper, whose literary history fully entitles him to a page in the next edition of the Calamities of Authors. Schopper was born at Neumarkt, in the Upper Palatinate, in the year 1542; he appears to have devoted himself to study, and, in 1565, commenced a translation of Reinike into Latin verse, at the suggestion of Sigismund Feyerabend, the bookseller of Frankfort. His task was interrupted by his being compelled to enter the army, and then cast into prison at Freiburg. From Freiburg he appears to have ascended the Danube to Vienna, having first assigned to another the task of finishing his translation. His military career would seem to have terminated at Vienna, where he was attacked by a violent fever, and

fell into such distress, that he had not a bed to rest on, but slept in the streets, and found shelter in an empty cask.*

At length, Josias Hufnagel, whom Schopper had not previously known, took pity upon him, out of regard to his talents and reputation, assisted him, gave him a sword and cloak (in lieu of those which had been stolen from him), and procured him the medical assistance of Paul Fabritius, the imperial physician. Having somewhat recovered, he returned in the autumn to Frankfort, where he was most kindly received by M. Johann Cuipius, the son-in-law of Christopher Egenolph, upon whose encouragement he completed his translation, and dedicated it to the Emperor Maximilian II, to whom he complains bitterly of the poverty and hardships which he had endured.* This translation, which has contributed so greatly to spread Reynard's fame among scholars who were unable to read his

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* Quin nec mihi decumbere
Molli licebat in Thoro,
Sed in plateæ dolio
Cubare sordidissimo,
Aut limen ante regium
Jacens in atro pulvere.—p. 301, ed. 1595.

† These scanty particulars are all that are known of the life of one whose smooth style and rough fortune keep him in memory with scholars. They have been gleaned from his dedicatory verses to Maximilian, and other parts of his work. What was his subsequent fate, or when and where "he laid his wearied back one day, in a most still bed, when the blanket of the night softly enwrapped him and all his woes," are entirely unknown.

history in any of the Teutonic versions, was published at Frankfort, in 1567, under the title, "*Opus Poeticum de Admirabili Fallacia et Astutia Vulpeculæ Reinikes Libros quatuor inaudito et plane nove more, nunc primum ex idiomate Germanico ad elegantiam et munditiam Ciceronis latinitate donatos, adjectis insuper elegantissimis iconibus, veras omnium Apologorum animaliumque species ad vivum adumbrantibus illustratos lectuque jucundissimos complectens. Cum brevissimis in margine commentariis, omniumque capitulorum argumentis, nec non rerum ac vocum memorabilium Indice copioso in operis calcem rejecto Auctore Hartmanno Schoppero, Novoforense Norico.*

There are no less than five other editions of this work published in the years 1574, 1579, 1580, 1584, and 1595 respectively, all bearing the title of *Speculum Vitæ Aulicæ. De Admirabili Fallacia, &c.*, and illustrated by the same admirable woodcuts by Virgilius Solis, and Jost Ammon. On the presumption that the reader may be curious to see a specimen of a work, of which the literary history is certainly somewhat remarkable, and of which the merit appeared to Lotichius so great as to justify him in comparing the author with Ovid and Tibullus

> "Schopperus nitidas dum carmine surgit in auras,
> Naso, fere par est, sive, Tibulle, tibi!"

the seventh chapter of the fourth book has been inserted in the appendix.* This has been selected not merely as a specimen of Schopper's style, but because

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* Appendix, No. VI.

it has been found necessary to omit a few words in the corresponding portion of Caxton's narrative.

§ xx. Having thus detailed, at what we fear many of our readers may consider far too great a length the particulars of the principal versions of Reynard's story, which exist either in Latin, or in any of the languages of Europe, we must now call their attention to those which are extant in our own mother tongue.

And here we would observe that Caxton's translation must not be regarded as the first introduction of the Reynardine Fables into the literature of England, for there is good reason to believe that they had been popular in this country in far earlier times. To say nothing of Chaucer's Nonnes Preeste's Tale, in which we learn, how

> "Dan Russel the fox stert up at ones,
> And by the Gargat hente Chauntecleere,"

which is obviously a genuine Reynard history, we have far earlier and more decisive evidence of that fact. In the volume of M. Chabaille, for instance, to which we have before alluded, there are to be found two extracts from the writings of Anglo-Norman Poets, from MSS. in the British Museum, in which distinct references are made to them. The first, from Chardri's Poem '*La Vie de Set Dormanz*,' is as follows:—

> "Ne voil pas en Fables d'Ovide
> Seinnurs, mestre mun estuide;
> Ne jà, sachez, ne parlerum
> Ne de Tristram, ne de Galerun,
> Ne de *Renard*, ne de *Hersente*
> Ne voil pas mettre m'entente."

The other is from Benoit de Saint-More's '*Estoire*

e la Généalogie des Dux qui unt esté par ordre en Normendie:'—

"Dunc vout quens Herluins parler;
Ausi li prist talant d'usler
Cume fist à dan Isengrim.
Un chevalier de Costensin
Conuit qu'il aveit jà veu."

The Harleian MS. (No. 219) of the Latin Fables of Odo de Ceriton was assuredly compiled in England, as the introduction of English verses into the moralizations clearly proves, and we there find several of Reynard's Histories related, with the names of the actors, Isingrinus, &c., a fact which serves to show that these stories were as familiar to the inhabitants of this island as to those of the continent.* Another manuscript in the same library (No 913), which was obviously written in the fourteenth century, contains a political ballad, in which is introduced the following curious allusion to the same cycle of fable. The author is complaining that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, and he illustrates his case by the following 'spelle':—

"The lyon lete cri, as hit was do,
For he hird, lome to telle,
And eke him was i-told also,
That the wolf didde no3te well.

* In the *Selection of Latin Stories*, edited by Mr. Wright for the Percy Society, several of these histories are printed. See more particularly No. LIX, p. 55, *De Isengrim monacho*, and the note, p. 229.

And the fox, that lither grome,
With the wolf i-wreiid was,
To-for har lord hi schold come
To amend har trepas.

And so men didde that seli asse,
That trepasid no3t, no did no gilte,
With ham bothe i-wreiid was,
And in the ditement was i-pilt.

The voxe hird a-mang al menne,
And told the wolf with the brode crune,
That on him send gees and henne,
That other geet and motune.

The seli aasse wend was saf,
Por he ne eete no3t bote grasse,
None 3iftes he ne 3af,
No wend that no harm nas.

Tho hi to har lord com to tune,
He told to ham law and skille;
Thos wikid bestis luid adune,
'Lord,' hi seiid, 'what is thi wille?'

Tho spek the lyon hem to,
To the fox anone his wille,
'Tell me, boi, what hast i-do,
Men beth aboute the to spille.'

Tho spek the fox first anone,
'Lord king, nor thi wille,
Thos men me wreiith of the tune,
And wold me gladlich for to spille.

'Gees no hen nac ic no3t,
Sire, for soth ic the sigge:

But as ic ham dere boȝt,
And bere ham up myn owen rigge.'

'Godis grame most hi have,
That in the curte the so pilt:
Whah hit is so, ic vouche save,
Ic for-ȝive the this gilte.'

The fals wolf stode be-hind,
He was doggid and ek felle,
'Ic am i-com ef grete kind,
Pes thou graunt me, that ou niȝt full welle.'

'What hast ido, bel ami,
That thou me so axest pes?'
'Sire,' he seid, I nel nozt lie
If thou we woldest huer a res.

'For ic hinted up the doune,
To loke, Sire, mi biȝete,
Ther ic slow a motune.
ȝe, Sir, and few gete.

'Ic am i-wreiid, Sire, to the,
For that ilk gilt:
Sire, I chul sker me,
If ne ȝef ham dint no pilt.'

'For soth I sigge the, bel ami,
Hi nad no gode munde,
Thai that wreiid the to mei,
Thou ne diddist noȝt bot thi kund.

'Sei, thou me, asse, what hast i-do?
Me thinchith thou cannist no gode:
Whi nadistou as other mo,
Thou come of lether stode.'

'Sertis, Sire, not ic noȝt,
Ic ete sage alnil gras,
More harm ne did ic noȝt,
Ther for i-wreiid ic was.'

'Bel ami, that was mis-do,
That was aȝe thi kund,
For to ete such gras so,—
Hastiliche ȝe him bind:

'Al his bonis ȝe to-draw,
Lok that ȝe noȝte lete,
And that ic ȝive al for lawe,
That his fleis be al i-frette.'"

But the most decided proof that this cycle of Romance was popular in England at a very early period, is furnished by an English metrical version of that branch of the French Roman du Renart, entitled *Si comme Renart fist avaler Ysengrim dedenz le puis,** which was communicated to the Reliquiæ Antiquæ by Sir Frederick Madden, by whom it was discovered in the Bodleian Library, in a Manuscript (Digby, No. 86, fol. 138), written not later than the reign of Edward I. As this poem, which is entitled "Of the Vox and of the Wolf," has already been printed by Mr. Wright, at the close of the introduction to his Selection of Latin Stories, it is obviously unnecessary to reproduce it upon this occasion.

§ xxi. But though it is evident, from these references and allusions, that many of the principal inci-

* See Méon, tom. i. p. 240-80.

dents in the fox's story had long been well known, and popular in this country;—there is no donbt, that after the sixth of June 1481, when William Caxton finished his translation of it, "into his rude and simple English in the Abbey of Westminster," and thereby placed before the lovers of romance a complete and connected history of Reynard's adventures, that its popularity was greatly increased and extended.*

Reynard's history was afterwards printed by Pynson. Of this edition, which, like Caxton's, is in folio, but one copy is known to exist. This, which is unfortunately imperfect, was formerly in the possession of Herbert, but is now in the Bodleian, to which it was bequeathed with the rest of his valuable library by

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* Of this interesting production of Caxton's press no less than five copies are known to be in existence. Of these, the King's Library in the British Museum, Lord Spencer, the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, and Maurice Johnson, Esq. of Spalding, each possess one. The fifth is in private hands. The first three copies before named (and probably the others also) have between sheets h and j a leaf inserted, containing apparently one page of matter which had been omitted in the making up and working off of the sheets. This page is so divided as to occupy the upper part of each side of the inserted leaf, and contains the passage which in the present reprint begins at line 16, p. 128, with the words "your chyldren," and ends at line 19 of the following page with the words "For I."

Dibdin states in his *Typographical Antiquities*, i. 364, "a copy of Caxton's edition is said to be in the Pepysian Collection at Cambridge, and another in the library at Lincoln Cathedral."

the late Mr. Douce* who had purchased it at the sale of Herbert's books.

Pynson's edition was followed, in 1550, by one in 12mo. the title of which runs as follows, "*Here beginneth the booke of Raynarde the Foxe, conteining divers goodlye hystoryes and parables, with others dyvers pointes necessarye for al men to be murked, by the which pointes, men maye lerne to come unto the subtyll knowledge of suche things, as daily ben used and had, in yᵉ counseyles of lordes and prelates, both ghostely and worldely, and also among marchauntes, and comen people. Imprinted in London in Saint Martens by Thomas Gaultier* 1550. This volume, which is of the greatest rarity, (the only known copy, I believe, being that in the British Museum), corresponds exactly with Caxton's translation, except in a few cases, where some words, which the editor probably regarded as obsolete, or at all events obscure, have been omitted, and their place supplied by more modern terms. This is an advantage, in as far as these changes serve to point out more clearly the precise signification of the older words and phrases.

The next edition is said to have been printed in

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* My old friend once assured me that he read Reynard the Fox regularly every Christmas to Mrs. Douce; and upon my venturing to inquire whether he did not find it necessary to make certain omissions, he replied, in the words of the jovial clerk of Copmanhurst, "Oh, of course, *exceptis excipiendis.*" It is obvious, from what has been stated in the text, that he did not use Pynson's edition upon these occasions.

1638, but I am not aware of the existence of a copy bearing that date; for which reason, and for others which it is unnecessary to detail, I am inclined to doubt the accuracy of the statement.

In 1650 appeared an edition in small quarto, illustrated with woodcuts of a very rude character,—the blocks of which appear to have been much worn. The title-page is as follows. *The most detectable history of Reynard the Fox, newly corrected and purged from all grossenesse in phrase and matter. As also augmented and inlarged with sundry excellent morals and expositions upon every severall chapter. London; Printed by J. Bell* 1650. In this edition the work is divided into twenty-five chapters only—the language has undergone further modernization—and the editor, whoever he was, concluded by promising "to salute the world with a second part."*

This modest promise does not appear, to have been fulfilled until the year 1681—although another edition of the former part appeared in 1667. In the latter year however, appeared a new edition of the old story of Reynard, which was accompanied by a supplement thus entitled:—*The most pleasant and delightful history of Reynard the fox. The second part, containing much*

* "If any be clear, let him hold on his path and avoid stumbling; and if any take distaste or offence, let him not blame me but the Fox, for it is only his language. But, if all things suit to my wisht imaginations, I shall then be encouraged to salute the world with a second part, clad in some neater English, deeper matter, and if not more, yet every whit as pleasant Morals."

matter of Pleasure and Content, written for the delight of young men, pleasure of the aged, and profit of all. To which is added many excellent morals.

Here read the Fox, his nature and his art;
Who in this Story acts the greatest Part.
Him here you find advanced highly, and
In this his grandeur for a time to stand;
Till he aspiring further, Treachery
Contrived, and did for his Treason die.

In 1684, this was followed by what may be considered as a third part of Reynard's history, written by some one, who clearly shows by his preface, that he was not the author of the work we have just quoted. This second supplement is entitled. *The shifts of Reynardine, the son of Reynard the fox, or a pleasant history of his life and death. Full of variety, &c. and may fitly be applied to the late times. Now published for the reformation of men's manners.*

Raro antecedentem scelestem
Deseruit pede pœna claudo.

Into the literary merit of these imitations, or, even of their successor, Cawood the rook,* it is unnecessary here to enter,—more especially since the space which

* *The History of Cawood the Rook, or the Assembly of Birds, with the several Speeches they made to the Eagle, in hopes to have the Government in his Absence. How the Rook was banished, with the Reason why Crafty Fellows are called Rooks.* 12mo. 1798.

There was, we believe, a somewhat similar continuation published in Germany some years since; a poem entitled *Hennynk de Han*, written by Renner under the assumed name of Sparre.

would thus be occupied, may be better devoted to a notice of the English metrical versions of Reynard's History.

§ xxii. The first of these, written by John Shurley, was published in 1681.† It is divided into chapters, corresponding with those of the prose edition of 1650, and the following lines, taken from the commencement of the poem, furnish a very fair specimen of its literary merits, which it must be confessed are of no very high order.

CHAPTER I.

How first the Princely Lyon did proclaim
A Solemn Feast, to which in numbers came
All Beasts, except the Fox, who did refrain,
'Gainst whom the Hound and Wolf do much complain.

About the Feast of Pentecost, when all
The Sun's bright rays shone on this earthly Ball,
When Trees were in their Gaudy Liv'ry dress'd,
And smiling Flowers each fragrant Field possess'd,
When balmy sweets perfum'd the gentle air,
And blooming Spices scented from afar.
All Nature then rejoycing in her prime,
Whilst birds sat warbling on the boughs sublime,
Even in the Glory of the pleasant Spring,
The Lyon then of Savage Beasts the King,
To celebrate this sacred Festival
Did all the Beasts that rang'd the Forests call,

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* *The most delightful History of Renard the Foxe in Heroic Verse, much illustrated and adorned with Allegorical Phrases and Refined English, containing much Wisdom and Policies of State, under the Fabling Discourse between Birds and Beasts, with a moral Explanation of each hard and doubtful Place or Part, being not only pleasant*

And those of Fields, nor did Domesticks spare
On his high Summons to attend him where
He had late builded him a Royal Court,
Sanden by name, in troops they there resort,
Fearing that might and pow'r to dare offend,
On which their Lives and Fortunes did depend.
The Foxe excepted none were absent found,
But all with reverence did encompass round
Their King, who with his Queen was plac'd on high,
But Reynard's guilt had caused him to fly,
Or lurk close in his Den, for well he knew
How he had injur'd most o' th' Savage Crew;
And that against him they complaints would make.
When silence being cry'd, thus *Isgrim* spake.
Isgrim the Wolf, who was to *Reynard* Kin,
Did to the Princely Lyon thus begin.

* * * * * *

If this metrical version, which is derived from the old prose narrative, exhibits but few claims to admiration on account of its poetical beauties, or as a work of art, that of its successor and rival can scarcely be held in much higher estimation, although evidently the production of a man well skilled in author-craft. This latter has, however, the merit of preserving in a greater degree the characteristics of the original, on which it was modelled, for while Shurley seems to have been unable to appreciate the quaint simplicity and quiet humour of Caxton's rude and simple En-

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but profitable, as well to the Learned of the Age as others. The Like never published to the World before. London, printed for Thomas Passenger at the Three Bibles, and Charles Passenger at the Seven Stars, on London Bridge. 1681, 4to.

glish,—the author of "The Crafty Courtier,"* despite of his allusions to contemporary matters, which often disturb the harmony of his work, approaches much more closely to, and gives a much better idea of the poem of Hartmann Schopper, from which it was derived. The following specimen, which forms the opening chapter of his book, will, we think, fully justify this opinion.

BOOK I, CHAPTER I.

Argument.

The Lion thro' his Realms decrees
A Festival, and solemn Peace:
His Subjects far and near resort,
And croud their Passage to his Court.
The wily Fox some danger guessed,
Suspects it, and avoids the Feast.
Nor Arms I sing, nor of Adventurous Deeds,
Nor Shepherd's playing on their Oaten Reeds,
But civil Fury, and invidious Strife
With the false pleasures of a Courtier's Life.

To whom ye *Muses*, will my Theme belong,
And whom shall I invoke to aid my Song?
Thalia! spritely'st of the Sacred *Nine*,
For Gayety and Mirth, 'tis said are thine,
Thee, to direct me in my Task I choose
Protect the Fable and inspire the Muse.

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* *The Crafty Courtier, or the Fable of Reynard the Fox; newly done into English Verse, from the Antient Latin Iambics of Hartm. Schopperus, and by him Dedicated to Maximilian, then Emperour of Germany. London: Printed for John Nutt, near Stationer's Hall,* 1706, 8*vo*.

Now, in her Glory did the Spring appear,
And the glad *Hind* beheld the coming Year;
Leaves cloath the Trees, and Flowers the Fields adorn
And chearful Birds salute the rosie Morn.
When the fierce LION from the Throne ordains
Peace to the various Nations of the Plains.
His Will the Heralds and a Feast proclaim,
Invite alike the Savage and the Tame.
BRUIN and ISGRIM, Princes of the Wood,
For Beasts too boast their Quality and Blood;
The PARD, descended of the Royal Race,
Approach'd the Throne, and took an envy'd Place:
The BADGER next, and then the Vulgar came;
Beasts without Number and without a Name:
For these a mighty Banquet is prepar'd,
To celebrate the Peace so late declar'd.
RENARD, invited as a fav'rite Guest,
Was only missing at the Royal Feast:
Conscious of Guilt, the Coward kept at Home,
Pretended he was sick and couldn't come:
Himself he knew unworthy, or was loth
To venture farther on a Tyrant's Oath.
The Tables spred, the flowing Bowls go round,
Healths to the King from ev'ry Room resound.
They more familiar as they drunker grow,
And ISGRIM rails against his absent Foe:
The FOX's Treasons he asserts at large,
The Many shout him, and approve the Charge.

§ XXIII. If it were not for the length to which this sketch has already extended, I might have offered some remarks on the characteristic epithets by which the several animals are distinguished in the different versions of Reynard's History, and on the valuable

illustration which the romance affords of by-gone customs, feelings, and opinions.* The court pageant which it has lately furnished forth, wedded to the music of Meyerbeer;† the traces of the story discoverable in the popular literature of many countries‡ and languages;§ the works of art to which it has given rise,—as for instance the illustrations of Ramberg,‖ Richter,¶ and Kaulbach,**—would all have afforded

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* Its value in illustrating the old Teutonic law, has been the subject of a special essay by Dreyer, entitled, "*Abhandlung von dem Nutzen der treflichen Gedichts Reinke de Vos in Erklärung der Deutschen Rechts-Alterthümer, insonderheit des ehemaligen Gerichtswesens; Wismar*, 1768, 4to. This paper is reprinted in Dreyer's *Nebenstunden*.

† There is no novelty even in this. For we are told that at a grand festival given by Philip le Bel of France, in 1313, there was exhibited a dramatic representation of the history of Reynard, who eventually became Pope, but even while in the full dignity of the papacy never ceased from devouring poultry, old and young. See *Le Grand, Fabliaux*, ii. 422, ed. 1829.

‡ As, for instance, in A. Kuhn's *Märkische Sagen und Legenden*, s. 296 et seq.; in the Lithuanian song, The Wolf's Wedding.—See Rhesa's *Dainos oder Litthauische Volkslieder, &c.*

§ As the modern Greek story book, in which the wolf, the fox, and the ass play such conspicuous parts. This poem, of three hundred and forty lines, is reprinted by Grimm, in his *Sendschrieben an Karl Lachman über Reinart Fuchs*, s. 75-90, from an edition published at Venice in 1832.

‖ *J. H. Rammberg. Umrisse zur Reineke Fuchs.* Hanover, 1827.

¶ *Reineke der Fuchs. Vierte Verbesserte Auflage mit neuen Kupfern verschönert, nach Zeichnungen von Professor L. Richter in Dresden.*

** These last admirable illustrations will be published in Eng-

ample field for observation; and lastly, I might have called attention to the evidence of the enduring vitality of Reynard's story, as manifested in Germany and Holland, not only by its publication in new "Volks bucher,"* but in other works of higher character, and in this country by Felix Summerly's reissue of Everdingen's engravings in his *Home Treasury*;† and by the recent appearance among us of a modernized version, especially intended for circulation among the rising generation.‡

On each of these several points the editor might and would fain have said a few words, but for the fear of drawing down upon himself, from some of the members of the Society, the reproof given to honest Dogberry,—"Neighbour, you are tedious." He is not altogether sure that what he has already done may not, in their eyes, appear to deserve this censure.

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land by Messrs. Longman, accompanied by a new metrical translation, rendered principally from Alkmar's version, into a somewhat peculiar style of verse, but one which we can confidently say is well befitting the subject-matter. The work will, it is understood, appear under the editorship and auspices of Samuel Naylor, Jun. Esq.

* *Reineke der Fucks ubersetzt von G. O. Marbach*, in Otto Wiegand's curious series of German "*Volksbucher*;" &c.

† *The Pleasant History of Reynard the Fox, told by Everdingen's Forty Pictures.*

‡ As one of the volumes of Parker's Collections in Popular Literature, under the title of *The most Delectable History of Reynard the Fox, and of his Son Reynardine. A revised version of an old romance.*

If it be so, he can only reply in the spirit, although not in the words, of the worthy officer of Messina, that his desire to promote the welfare of the Percy Society, has alone induced him to lay before its members as complete a sketch as he could produce of the literary history of that most delectable romance,

REYNARD THE FOX.

APPENDIX TO THE INTRODUCTION.

APPENDIX No. I.

MS. Bibl. Pub. Cantab. Gg. 5, 35.

(Written before the middle of the 11th century.)

Quibus ludus est animo
Et jocularis cantio
Hoc advertant ridiculum
Ex vero non fictitum.

Sacerdos jam ruricola
Ætate sub decrepita
Vivebat amans pecudis
Hic enim mos est rusticis.

Ad cujus tale studium
Omne patiret commodum
Nisi foret tam proxima
Luporum altrix silvula.

Hi minuentes numerum
Per ejus summam generum
Dant impares ex paribus,
Et pares ex imparibus.

Qui dolens sibi fieri
Detrimentum peculii
Quia diffidit viribus
Vindictum quærit artibus

Fossam cavat non modicam
Intus ponans agniculam
Et ne pateret hostibus
Superne tegit frondibus.

Humano datum commodo
Nil majus est ingenio
Lupus dum nocte circuit
Spem prede captus incidit.

Accurrit mane presbiter
Gaudet vicisse taliter
Intus protento baculo
Lupi minatur oculo.

Jam inquit fera pessima
Tibi rependam dabitur
Aut hic frangetur baculus
Aut hic crepabit oculus.

Hoc dicto simul impulit,
Verbo sed factum defuit
Nam lupus servans oculum
Morsu retentat baculum.

At ille miser vetulus
Dum sese trahit firmius
Ripa cedente corruit
Ut lupo comes incidit.

Hinc stat lupus, hinc presbiter,
Timent sed disparibiliter,
Nam ut fidenter arbitror
Lupus stabat securior.

Sacerdos secum mussitat
Septemque psalmos ruminat,
Sed revolvit frequentius
'Miserere mei Deus.'

Hoc inquit infortunii,
Dant mihi vota populi
Quorum neglexi animas
Quorum comedi victimas.

Pro defunctorum merito
Cantat Placebo domino,
Et pro votis viventium,
Totum cantat psalterium.

Post completum psalterium
Commune prestat commodum
Sacerdotis timiditas
Atque lupi calliditas.

Nam cum acclivis Presbiter
Perfiniret Pater Noster,
Atque clamaret Domino
Sed libera nos a malo.

Hic dorsum ejus insilit,
Et saltu liber effugit
Et cujus arte captus est
Illo pro scala usus est.

Ast ille lætus nimium
Cantat Laudate Dominum,
Et promisit pro populo
Se oraturum a modo.

Hinc a vicinio quæritur
Et inventus extrahitur
Sed nunquam devotius
Oravit nec fidelius.

This story forms the 12th branch of the French Roman de Renart.—See *Grimm Reinhart Fuchs*, s. cxviii.

APPENDIX No. II.

Specimen of the Historie van Reinâert die Vos.—Printed by Gheraert Leeu, in 1479.

Het was omtrent pinxteren, also dat tet wout dan gaerne lustelic gestelt plech te wesen, van loueren bloesseme bloemen

wel rukende ende mede van voghelen ghesanghe, Alsoe dat dye edel coninck van allen dieren woude des pinxtere dages et stade een eerlic hof houden dat hi ouer al sijn lante weten dede. Eñ liet dat mit neerste gebiedē om een yegelic dier al daer te comen. Also dat alle die dyeren groot eñ cleyne te houe quamē, Sonder Reynaert die vos, want hij bekende hem selven broekick aen menighen dyerē dye daer wesen souden, Alsoe dat hi dat niet waghen en dorste daer te comē. Doe die conine aldus alle sijn hof versamēt hadde doe en was daer nyemant dan alle die das, hi en had ouer reynaert swaerlic te claghen.

Die erste claghe van Ysesgrym dē wolf ouer Reynaert.

Ysegrym mit sinen magē die ghine staē voer den coniē ēn sprac, lief ghenadighe here heer coninc doer uwe grote mogentheit doer recht eñ doer uwe grote genade soe wilt mijnre ont fermen der groter onredelicker misdaet die Reynaer die vos aen mi eñ aen myne huusvrouwe gedaen heeft. Also dat hi tot mine huys en mit wille vā mijnre huusvrouwe gheweest is, eñ daer beseykede hi mijn Kinderen daer si laghen, also dat si daer al blint of geworden sijn. Noch meer so sijn hier dage af geraemt eñ udadingt wart also dat Reynert soude hier een onscult voer doen, also dat doe die heiligē voert gebrocht worden, doe had reynaert hē anders bedacht eñ hi ontvoer roekeloes weder in sijn veste. Eñ lieue heer coninck dit weten vele van de besten die hier tot uwen houe sijn ghecomen. Noch heeft hi mi in vele meer anderen saken zeer grotelic misdaen, Eñ hi en leeft niert diet val geseggen soude die ic op dese tijt staen wil laten. Mer die scande eñ die onere die hi mine wiue ghedaen heeft dye en wil ic niet verschwigen noch oughewroekē laten by en salt mi beteren.

APPENDIX No. III.

From the old Flemish Metrical Reinaert, ed. Willems.

" Het was op enen pinxter dach
Dat men woude ende velde sach
Groen staen myt lover ende grass
Ende menich vogel blide wass
Mit sange, in hagen ende in bomen;
Die crude sproten uut, ende die bloemen
Die wel roken hier ende daer,
Ende die dach was schoon und claar.
Nobel, die conine van allen dieren,
Had sijn hoff doen kreygiren
Sijn lant al door, ende overal,
Dat his waende hadde his geval,
Houden ten wel groten love.
Doe quamen tes conimx hove,
Alle die diere, groot ende clene,
Sonder vos Reinaert allene.
Hi hadde te hove so vele misdaen,
Dat hire niet dorste gaen,
Die hem beschuldich Kent ontsieh.
Also was Reinaerde gesciet;
Ende hier omme scuwedis coninx hof,
Daer hi in hadde cranken lof,
Doe al dat hof versamet was,
Was daer niemen, sonder die das,
Hine hadde te clagene over Reinaerde,
Den fellen, metten rodon baerde.
Nu gaet hier op ene clage.
Isengrijn ende sine mage,
Gingen voor den coninc staen,

Isengrijn begonste saen,
Ende spiac, ‘ Coninc here,
Dor u edelheit ende dor u ere,
Ende dor recht, ende dor genaden,
Ontfermt u der groter scade,
Die mi Reinaert heeft gedaen,
Daer ic af dicken hebbe ourfaen,
Groten lachter ende verliess.
Voor al dandre ontferme u dies,
Dat he mijn wijf hevet verhoert,
Endi menen kindren so misvoert,
Dat hise be sekede, claer si lagen,
Datter twee noint [meer] ne sagen,
Ende si worden staer blint;
Nochtan hoondi mi sint,
Het was so verre comen,
Datte enen dach af was genommen,
Ende Reinaert soude hebben gedaen,
Sine ousculde ende also saen,
Alse die helege waren brocht,
Was hi andersins bedocht,
Endo outvoer ons in sine veste,
Here dit kennen noch die beste,
Die te hove sijn comen hier.
Mi hevet Reinaert, dat felle dier,
So vele te leede gedaen,
It weeh wel, al sonder waen,
Ware al tlaken perkement,
Dat men maket nu te Gent,
Ine gescreeft niet daer an,
Dies swijgic nochtan;
Ne ware mijns wives lachter,
Ne mach hiet bliven achter,
No onverswegen, no ongewroken.

APPENDIX No. IV.

(From Hoffman v. Fallersleben's Reincke Vos.)

It geschach up enen pinkstedach,
Dat men de wolde uñ velde sach
Grone stân mit lôf uñ gras
Uñ mannich vogel vrolik was
Mit sange in hagen uñ up bomen;
De krude sproten uñ de blomen,
De wol röken hier un dâr:
De dach was schone, dat wëder klâr,
Nobel de Konnink van allen deren
Hêlt hof uñ lêt den ûtkrejêren
Syn lant dorch over al.
Dar quemen vele heren mit grotem schal
Ok quemen to hove vele stolter gesellen,
De mon nicht alle honde tellen:
Lütke de krön uñ Marquart de hegger,
Ja, desse weren dâr alle degger;
Wente de konninck mit synen heren,
Mênde to holden hof mit eren,
Mit vronden uñ mit groten love,
Uñ hadde vorbodet dâr to hove,
Alle de dere grôt uñ klene,
Sunder Reinken den vos allêne.
He hadde in dem hof so vele misdân,
Dat he dâr nicht en dorste komen noch gân.
De quât deit, de schuwet gêrn dat licht,
Also dede ôk Reinke de bosewicht,
He schuwede sere des Konninges hof,
Darin he hadde sêr kranken lof.

Do de hof alsus angink,
En was dâr nên an allêne de Grevinck,
He hadde to klagen over Reinken den vos,
Den men hêlt sêr falsch uñ lôs.

APPENDIX V.

(From Reinicken Fuchs, by Beuther.)

Auff einen Pfingstag es geschach,
Das man die welde und Felde sag,
Schen lustig stehn mit Laub und gras
Und manich vogel frolich was,
Mit singen springen in den welden,
Die blümlin blüen auff den Felden,
Wolriechend stehen hin und dar,
Der tag was schön, das wetter klar;
Nobel der König aller Thier
Ein tag ausschreiben liess gar schier,
Durch sein gantz Land und überall
Da kamen viel herren mit grossern schall,
Dazu viel stoltzer junger gesellen,
Die man nicht all wol kunte zellen.
Lutge der Kranck, und Marquart der herr,
Ja dise kamen auch daher.
Denn der König meinte mit seinen herren
Zu halten einen tag mit ehren.
Mit freuden und lob, wie ich sag,
Und hatte verschrieben zu dem tag
Ja alle Thiere gross und auch klein,
On Reiniken den Fuchs allein.
Der hett so viel misshandelt gar,
Das er nicht durfte kommen dar.

Wer ubels thut, scheut gern das Licht,
So thet auch Reiniken de bössewicht.
Des Königs hoff er scheuet sehr
Denn er darinn hett wenig Ehr.
Da nun des hoff also angieng
War nyemandt da den der Greving,
Der hett ze klagen über Reiniken den Fuchs,
Den hielt man für ein falschen Luchss.

APPENDIX No. VI.

(From Hartmann Schopper's De Admirabili Astutia Vulpeculæ Reinikes, lib. iv. c. vii.)

ARGUMENTUM.

Aptant se pugnæ lupus, et vulpecula fallax;
Viribus hic præstans corporis, illa dolis.
Quæ trucis exuperat crudelia membra Gigantis,
Sæpè brevi virtus corpore magna latet.

Robustus Isengrinius
Livore plenus impio,
Et extremendiis unguibus,
Rictus suos gravissimi
Distendit instar fulminis
Omnique totus impetu
Irrumpit in vulpeculam.
Que nixa miris fraudibus
Resistit ipsi fortiter
Contraq; nunc assultibus
Insurgit et contrarijs
Eludit urgens ictibus.
At quando jam viriliter
Se sat superq; gesserat
Memorq; semper Rigenæ
Olente cauda plurimum
Diuq; mulus cursibus
Vexarat Isengrinium:
Et insequentem luserat
Pedum citis ambagibus
Tandem lupi comprenditur,
Ferocientis unguibus.

Tunc qui prius male dixerat,
Verbisque fulminaverat,
Hostemque sat notabili,

Vexatione carpserat,
Jam pisce quovis mutior
Silebat æger Reinike.
Lupusque magnis virium
Quassabat illum motibus,
Ut de salute corporis
Actum putaretis sui.

Quare lupo Mauortio,
Manus inermes porrigens
Is supplicabat talibus.

Per te omnes Cœlites,
Per ossa matris optimæ
Manesque patris comprecor,
Vocem precantis accipe
Vitamque serves integram
Tibi quousque vixero,
Me dedo totus in jugum,
Lubenter atque serviam,
Dum sensus hoc in corpore
Latebit atque spiritus,
Sed id furens vulpeculæ
Recusat Isengrinius
Vitamque sævus abnegat,
Haud verba dudum talia
Dabas, ait, nequissime,
Bonos virosque nobiles
Illa tua fallacia,
Et ore mendacissimo
Tam desines lacessere,
Opprobrijsque ludere,

Non te sepultum splendido
Plorabit uxor marmore
Carive flebunt liberi
Sed præda turpis omnibus
Corvis eris rapacibus.
Aut te profundo gurgitis
In amne mersum vitreis
Cibum relinquam piscibus,
Ut atra lambant vulnera
Et dente morsum distrahant.

Hac ore dum durissimo
Profundit Isengrimus
Vulpes memor recentia
Consulta versat altera
Manuque mirum per modum
Lupi pudenda corripit
Hostiliterque comprimit,
Dolore præ gravissimo
Ut maximis resolveret
Os turpe cum clamoribus.
Astuta vulpes interim
Ex hostis ore subtrahit
Manum potenter alteram,
Hic pugna surgit aspera :
Viresque nam cum Reinike
Manus haberet liberas,
Duosque pugnos fuerat,
Lupum molestum vinculis
Constringit arctioribus,
Remordet, urget, opprimit
Ut cordis ex angustia

De ventris antro turgidi
Ingens onus reponeret.
Largumque stercus omnium
In vultibus spectantium
Cacaret Isengrinius
Clamaret atque mordio.
Id intuentes proximi
Turbantur omnes et lupi
Confusioni condolent,
Statimque Regi supplicant,
Misertus ut finem gravi
Imponat huic certamine.
Extemplo Rex benignior
Suis ministris imperat,
Ut bella dimicantium
Pugnamque tollant horridam.

Thystorye
OF
Reynard the Foxe.

This is the Table of the

Hystorye of Reynart the Foxe.

In the first how the kynge of alle bestes the lyon helde his court. Capitulo primo . . . 2

How Isegrym the wolf complayned first on the foxe. Capitulo ij. 3

The complaynt of Curtoys the hound and of the catte Tybert. Capitulo iij. . . . 3

How Grymbert the dasse the foxes susters sone answered for the foxe to the kynge. Capitulo iiij. . 5

How Chantecler the cok complayned on the foxe. Capitulo v. 8

How the kynge sayde touchyng the complaynt. Capitulo vj. 10

How Bruyn the bere spedde wyth the foxe. Ca. vij. . 12

How the bere ete the hony. Capitulo viij. . . 14

The complaynt of the bere vpon the foxe. Capitulo ix. 21

How the kynge sent Tybert the catte for the foxe. Capitulo x. 22

How Grymbert brought the foxe to the lawe. Capitulo xj. 29

How the foxe was shryuen to Grymbert. Capitulo xij. 31

How the foxe cam to the court and excused hym. Capitulo xiij. 36

How the foxe was arestid and juged to deth. Capitulo xiiij. 39

How the foxe was ledde to the galwes. Capitulo xv. . 40
How the foxe made open confession to fore the kynge and to fore alle them that wold here it. Capitulo xvj. 43
How the foxe brought them in danger that wold have brought hym to deth and how he gate the grace of the kyng. Capitulo xvij. . . . 46
How the wulf and the bere were arestyd by the labour of the foxe. Capitulo xviij. . . . 58
How the wulf and his wyf suffred her shoys to be pluckyd of, and how the foxe dyde them on his feet for to go to Rome. Capitulo xix. . . . 59
How Kywart the hare was slayn by the foxe. Capitulo xx. 63
How the foxe sente the hares heed to the kynge by Bellyn the rame. Capitulo xxj. . . 67
How Bellyn the rame and alle his lygnage were jugged to be gyuen to the wulf and to the bere. Capitulo xxij. 70
How the kynge helde his feste, and Lapreel the cony complayned to hym of the foxe. Capitulo xxiij. 72
How Corbant the roek complayned on the foxe for the deth of his wyf. capitulo xxiiij. . . 73
How the kynge was angry of these complayntes. Capitulo xxv. 75
How Grymbert warned the foxe that the kynge was wroth and wold slee hym. Capitulo xxvj. . 78
How the foxe cam agayn to the court and of his shrifte. Capitulo xxvij. 79
How the foxe excused hym byfore the kynge. Capitulo xxviij. 89
How dame Rukenawe the she ape answerd for the foxe. Capitulo xxix. 99
A parable of a man whiche delyuerd a serpent fro deth. Capitulo xxx. 103
Of them that were frendis and kyne to the foxe. Capitulo xxxj. 108

How the foxe subtylly excused hym of the deth of the hare and of other maters and how he gate his pees. Capitulo xxxij. 110
How the wulf complayned on the foxe. Capitulo xxxiij. 131
A parable of the foxe and the wulf. Capitulo xxxiiij. 136
How the wulf caste his gloue to fight with the foxe. Capitulo xxxv. 142
How the foxe toke vp the gloue, and the kynge sette them day and felde for to fighte. Capitulo xxxvi. 143
How dame Rukenawe the she ape counseylled the foxe how he shold doo in the feld ayenst the wulf. Capitulo xxxij. . . . . *ibid.*
How the foxe cam in to the feld. Capitulo xxxiij. . 146
How the foxe and the wulf foughten to gydre. Capitulo xxxix. 147
How the foxe beyng vnder the wulf with glosyng and flateryng wordes cam to his aboue. Capitulo xl. . 151
How Ysegrym the wulf was ouercomen and the batayl fynysshyd, and how the foxe had the worship. Capitulo xlj. 156
An example that the foxe told to the kyng whan he had wonne the felde. Capitulo xlij. . . 158
How the foxe with his frendes departed nobly fro the kynge and wente to his castel Maleperduys. Capitulo xliij. 164

HYER BEGYNNETH THYSTORYE OF REYNARD THE FOXE.

In this historye ben wreton the parables, good lernynge, and dyverse poyntes to be merkyd, by whiche poyntes men maye lerne to come to the subtyl knoweleche of suche thynges as dayly ben used, and had in the counseyllys of lordes and prelates, gostly and worldly; and, also emonge marchantes and other comone peple. And this booke is maad for nede and prouffyte of alle god folke, as fer as they in redynge or heeryng of it shal mowe understande and fele the forsayd subtyl deceytes that dayly ben used in the worlde, not to thentente that men shold use them, but that every man shold eschewe and kepe hym from the subtyl false shrewis that they be not deceyvyd. Thenne who that wyll have the very understandyng of this mater, he muste ofte and many tymes rede in thys boke, and ernestly and diligently marke wel that he redeth, for it is sette subtylly, lyke as ye shal see in redyng of it, and not ones to rede it, for a man shal not wyth ones over redyng fynde the ryght understanding, ne comprise it wel, but oftymes to rede it shal cause it wel to be understande. And for them that understandeth it, it shall be ryght joyous, playsant, and prouffitable.

HOW THE LYON, KYNGE OF ALLE BESTIS, SENTE OUT HIS MANDEMENTIS THAT ALLE BEESTIS SHOLDE COME TO HIS FEEST AND COURT.

CAPITULO PRIMO.

It was aboute the tyme of Penthecoste or Whytsontyde, that the wodes comynly be lusty and gladsom, and the trees clad with levys and blossome, and the ground with herbes and flowris swete smellyng, and also the fowles and byrdes syngen melodyously in theyr armonye, that the lyon, the noble kynge of all beestis wolde in the holydayes of thys feest holde an open court at Stade, whyche he dyde to knowe over alle in his land, and commanded by strayte commyssyons and maundements that euery beest shold come thyder, in suche wyse that alle the beestis grete and smale cam to the courte, sauf Reynard the Foxe, for he knewe hymself fawty and gylty in many thynges ayenst many beestis that thyder sholde comen, that he durste not aventure to goo thyder. Whan the kynge of alle beestis had assembled alle his court, ther was none of them alle but that he had complayned sore on Reynart the Foxe.

THE FIRST COMPLAYNT MADE ISEGRYM THE WULF ON REYNART.

CAPITULO IJ.

ISEGRYM the wulf, wyth his lynage and frendes, cam and stode to fore the kynge, and sayde: Hye and

mighty prynce, my lord the kynge, I beseche yow that thurgh your grete myght, ryght, and mercy, that ye wyl have pyte on the grete trespas, and the unresonable mysdedes that Reynart the Foxe hath don to me and to my wyf, that is to wete, he is comen in to my hows ayenst the wylle of my wyf, and there he hath bespattered my chyldren where as they laye, in suche wyse as they therof ben woxen blynde. Wherupon was a day sette, and was juged that Reygnart shold come and have excused hym hierof, and have sworen on the holy sayntes, that he was not gylty therof, and whan the book with the sayntes was brought forth, tho had Reygnart bythought hym other wyse, and wente his waye agayn in to his hole, as he had nought sette therby, and, dere kynge, this knowen wel many of the bestes that now be comen hyther to your court, and yet hath he trespaced to me in many other thinges, he is not lyvynge that coude telle alle that I now leve untolde. But the shame and vylonye that he hath don to my wyf, that shall I never hyde ne suffre it unavenge but that he shal make to me large amendes.

THE COMPLAYNT OF COURTOYS THE HOUNDE.

CAPITULO III.

Whan thyse wordes were spoken so stode there a lytyl hounde and was named Courtoys, and complayned to the kynge, how that in the colde wynter, in the

harde froste, he had ben sore forwynterd, in such wyse as he had kepte no more mete than a puddyng, whych puddyng Reygnard the Foxe had taken away from hym.

Tho spak Thybert the Catte.

Wyth this so cam Tybert the Catte wyth an irous moed, and sprang in emonge them and sayde: My lord the kyng, I here hier that Reggnart is sore complayned on, and hier is none but that he hath ynowh to doo to clere hym self; that Courtoys hier complayneth of, that is passyd many yeres goon, how be it that I complayne not, that pudyng was myne, for I hadde wonne it by nyghte in a mylle. The myllar laye and slepe, yf Courtoys had ony parte hieron, that cam by me to. Thenne spak Panther. Thynke ye Tybert that it were good that Reynard sholde not be complayned on, he is a very murderer, a rover, and a theef. He loveth no man so wel, not our lord the kyng here, that he wel wold that he shuld lese good and worshyp, so that he myght wynne as moche as a legge of a fat henne. I shal telle yow what I sawe hym do yesterday, to Cuwart the hare that hier standeth in the kynges pees and saufgarde. He promysed to Cuwart the hare, and sayde, he wold teche hym his Credo, and make hym a good chapelayn; he made hym goo sytte bytwene his legges, and sange, and cryde lowde, Credo, Credo. My way laye therby there that I herde this songe. Tho wente I ner and fonde Maister Reynar that had lefte that he fyrst redde and songe, and bygan to playe his olde playe, for he had caught Kywaert by the

throte, and had I not that tyme comen, he sholde have taken his lyf from hym, like as ye hiere may see on Kywaert the Hare the fresse wounde yet; forsothe my lord the kynge, yf ye suffre this unpunysshyd and lete hym go quyte that hath thus broken your peas, and wyl do no right after the sentence and jugement of your men, your children many yeris herafter shal be myspreysed and blamed therfore. Sykerly, Panther, sayd Isegrym, ye saye trouthe, hit were good that right and justyse were don, for them that wolde fayne lyve in peas.

HOW GRYMBART THE DASSE, THE FOXES SUSTERS SONE, SPACK FOR REYNART, AND ANSWERD TOFORE THE KYNGE.

CAPITULO IIIJ.

Tho spack Grymbart the dasse, and was Reynart's sister sone, wyth an angry moed. Sir Isegrym, that is evyl sayd; it is a comyn proverbe, an enemyes mouth, sayth seeld wel. What leye ye, and wyte ye myn eme Reynart? I wold that ye wolde aventure that who of yow tweyne had moste trespaced to other sholde hange by the necke as a theef on a tree. But and yf he were as wel in this court, and as wel wyth the kynge, as ye be, it shold not be thought in hym, that it were ynowh, that ye shold come and aske hym forgyvnes, ye have byten and nypte myn uncle wyth your felle and sharp teeth many mo tymes than I can telle, yet wil I telle some poyntes that I wel knowe.

Knowe not ye how ye mysdeled on the plays whiche he threwe doun fro the carre, whan ye folowed after fro ferre. And ye ete the good plays allone, and gaf hym no more than the grate or bones, whyche ye myght not ete your self. In lyke wyse dyde ye to hym also of the fatte vlycche of bacon, whiche savourd so wel, that ye allone ete in your bely, and whan myn eme askyd his parte, tho answerd ye hym agayne in scorne, Reynart, fayr yonglyng, I shal gladly gyve you your part, but, myn eme gate ne had nought, ne was not the better, notwithstandyng he had wonnen the flycche of bacon wyth grete drede, for the man cam and threw hym in a sacke, that he scarsely cam out wyth his lyf. Suche maner thynges hath Reynart many tymes suffred thurgh Ysegrym.

O ye lordes, thynke ye that this is good, yet is ther more, he complayneth how that Reynart myn eme hath moche trespaced to hym by cause of his wyf. But that is wel seven yer to fore er he wedded her, and she was sone heled therof. Hierof by ryght shold be no complaynt: were Isegrym wyse he shold have lefte that: he doth to hym self no worshyp thus to sklaundre his wyf: she playneth not. Now maketh Kywaert the hare a complaynt also, that thynketh me a vyseuase, yf he rede ne lerned a right his lesson, sholde not Reynard his maister bete hym therfore? yf the scolers were not beten, ne smyten and reprised of their truantrye, they shold never lerne.

Now complayneth Courtoys, that he with payne had gotten a puddyng in the wynter, at such tyme as the

coste is evyl to fynde, therof hym had be better to have holde his pees, for he had stolen it. Male quesisti et male perdidisti. Hit is ryght that it be evil loste, that is evil wonne ; who shal blame Reynart, yf he have taken fro a theef stolen good, hit is reson. Who that understandeth the lawe and can discerne the right, and that he be of hye burthe as myn eme Reynart is, whiche knoweth wel how he shal resseyve stolen good, ye, al had he Courtoys hanged whan he fonde hym with the menowr, he had not moche mysdon ne trespaced, sauf ayenst the crowne, that he had don justyse wythout leve ; wherfore for the honour of the kynge he dyde it not, all hath he but lytyl thanke. What skathed it hym that he is thus complayned on ? Myn eme is a gentil and a trewe man, he may suffre no falshede, he doth nothyng but by his prestes counseyl, and I saye yow, syth that my lorde the kynge hath do proclamed his pees, he never thoughte to hurte ony man, for he eteth no more than ones a day, he lyveth as a recluse, he chastiseth his body and wereth a sherte of heer ; hit is more than a yere that he hath eten no flesshe, as I yesterday herd saye of them that cam fro hym ; he hath lefte and geven over his Castel Maleperduys, and hath bylded a cluse, theryn dwelleth he, and hunteth no more, ne desyreth no wynnynge, but he lyveth by almesse and taketh nothyng but suche as men gyve hym for charyte, and doth grete penance for his synnes, and he is woxen moche pale and lene of prayeng and wakyng, for he wolde be fayn wyth God. Thus as Grymbert his eme stode and preched thise

wordes, so sawe they comen doun the hylle to hem Chauntecler the cock, and brought on a biere a deed henne, of whom Reynart had byten the heed of, and that muste be shewed to the kynge to have knowleche therof.

HOWE THE COCKE COMPLAYNED ON REYNART.

CAPITULO V.

CHAUNTECLER cam forth, and smote pyteously his handes and his fetheris, and on eche side of the byer wenten tweyne sorouful hennes, that one was called Cantart, and that other goode henne Crayant; they were two the fayrest hennes that were bytwene Holland and Arderne. Thise hennes bare eche of them a brennyng tapre whyche was longe and strayte. Thise two hennes were Coppens susters, and they cryed so pitously, alas and weleaway, for the deth of her dere suster Coppen. Two yonge hennes bare the byere, whiche kakled so hevyly, and wepte so lowde, for the deth of Coppen their moder that it was ferre herde. Thus cam they to gydre to fore the kynge, and Chauntecleer tho seyde: Mercyful lord, my lord the kynge, plese it yow to here our complaynte, and abhorren the grete scathe that Reynart hath don to me and my children that hiere stonden. It was so that in the begynnyng of appryl whan the weder is fayr, and that I as hardy and prowde, bycause of the grete lynage that I am comen of, and also hadde, for I had viij fayr sones

and seven fayr daughters whiche my wyf had hatched, and they were alle stronge and fatte, and wente in a yerde whiche was walled round aboute, in whiche was a shadde where in were six grete dogges, whiche had to tore and plucked many a beestis skyn, in suche wyse as my chyldren were not aferd. On whom Reynart the theef had grete envye, by cause they were so sure that he cowde none get of them, how wel oftymes hath this fel theef goon rounde aboute this wal, and hath leyde for us, in suche wyse that the dogges have be sette on hym and have hunted hym away. And once they leep on hym upon the banke, and that cost hym somewhat for his thefte. I saw that his skyn smoked, nevertheles he wente his waye, God amende it.

Thus were we quyte of Reynart a longe whyle; atte laste cam he in lyknes of an heremyte, and brought to me a lettre for to rede, sealed wyth the kynges seal, in whyche stode wreton, that the kynge had made pees over al in his royame, and that alle maner beestis and fowlles shold doo none harme ner scathe to ony other; yet, sayd he to me more, that he was a cloysterer, or a closyd recluse becomen, and that he wolde receyve grete penance for his synnes, he shewd me his slavyne, and pylche, and an heren sherte ther under, and thenne sayd he, syr Chaunteclere, after thys tyme be no more aferd of me, ne take no hede, for I now wil ete no more flesshe, I am forthon so olde, that I wolde fayn remembre my sowle; I will now go forth, for I have yete to saye my sexte, none, and my evensonge, to God I bytake yow. Tho wente Reynart thens sayeng

his Credo, and leyde hym under an hawthorn. Thenne was I glad and mery, and also toke none hede, and wente to my chyldren, and clucked hem togydre, and wente wythout the wal for to walke, wherof is moche harme comen to us, for Reynart laye under a busshe and cam krepyng bitwene us and the yate, so that he caght one of my chyldren, and leyd hym in his male, wherof we have had grete harme, for syth he hath tasted of hym, ther myght never hunter ne hounde save ne kepe hym from us, he hath wayted by nyghte and daye in suche wyse, that he hath stolen so many of my chyldren, that of xv. I have but foure; in suche wyse hath this theef forslongen them; and yet yesterday was Coppen my daughter that hier lyeth upon the byer with the houndes rescowed. This complayne I to yow gracious kynge, have pyte on myn grete and unresonable damage and losse of my fayre chyldren.

HOW THE KYNG SPACK TOUCHYNG THIS COMPLAYNT.

CAPITULO VJ.

THENNE spack the kynge: Syre Dasse, here ye this wel of the recluse your eme? he hath fasted and prayde, that yf I lyve a yere he shal abye it; nowe hearke Chauntecler, your playnt is ynough, your doughter that lyeth here dede, we wyl gyve to her the dethes right, we may kepe her no lenger, we wil betake her to God, we wylle syngen here vygylie, and brynge her worshipfully on erthe, and thenne we wille speke wyth

thise lordes, and take counseyl, how we may do ryght and justyse of thys grete murdre, and brynge this fals theef to the lawe. Tho begonne they Placebo Domino, with the verses that to longen whiche yf I shold saye, were me to longe. Whan this vigilye was don, and the commendacion, she was leyde in the pytte, and ther upon was leyde a marble stone polyshed as clere as ony glas and theron was hewen in grete lettres in this wyse: Coppe, Chauntekler's doughter, whom Reynart the foxe hath byten, lyeth hier under buryed; complayne ye her for, she is shamefully comen to her deth.

After this, the kynge sente for his lordes and wysest of his counseyl for to take advys, how this grete murdre and trespaas shold be punyshyd on Reynart the foxe. Ther was concluded and apoynted for the beste, that Reynart shold be sent for, and that he lefte not for ony cause, but he came into the kynges court, for to here wat shold be sayd to hym, and that Bruyn the bere shold do the message. The kynge thought that alle this was good, and said to Brune the bere: Syr Brune, I wyl that ye doo this message, but, see wel to for your self, for Reynart is a shrewe, and felle, and knoweth so many wyles, that he shal lye and flatre, and shal thynke how he may begyle, deceyve, and brynge yow to some mockerye. Tho sayd Brune, what good lord late it allone, deceyveth me the foxe, so have I ylle lerned my casus, I trowe he shal come to late to mocque me. Thus departed Brune meryly fro thens, but it is to drede that he cam not so meryly agayn.

HOW BRUNE THE BEERE WAS SPED OF REYNART THE FOXE.

CAPITULO VIJº.

Now is Brune goon on his waye toward the foxe wyth a stowte moede, whiche supposed wel that the foxe sholde not have begyled hym, as he cam in a derke wode in a forest were as Reynart had a bypath whan he was hunted, ther bysyde was an hie montayne and land, and there muste Brune in the myddel goon over, for to goo to Maleperduys, for Reynart had many a dwellyng place, but the castel of Maleperduys was the beste and the fastest burgh that he had. Ther laye he inne whan he had nede, and was in ony drede or fere.

Now whan Bruyn was comen to Malperduys he fonde the yate fast shette, tho wente he to fore the yate and satte vpon his taylle, and called, Reynart, be ye at home? I am Brownyng, the kynge hath sente me for yow that ye sholde come to court, for to plete your caas. He hath sworn there by his God, come ye not, or brynge I yow not with me for tabyde suche right and sentence as shal be there gyven, it shal coste you your lyf, he wyl hange yow, or sette yow on the ratte. Reynart doo by myn counseyl and come to the court. Reynart laye within the gate as he ofte was wonte to doo for the warmth of the sonne. Whan Reynart herd Bruyn tho wente he inneward in to his hole, for Maleperduys was ful of hooles, hier one hool and ther an other, and yonder an other, narowe, croked and longe, wyth many weyes to goo out, whiche he opend and shette after that he had nede, whan he had ony proye

brought home, or that he wiste that ony sought hym for hys mysdedes and trespaces, thenne he ran and hydde hym fro his enemyes in to hys secrete chambres, that they coude not fynde hym, by which he deceyvyd many a beest that sought hym; and tho thought Reynart in hym self how he myght best brynge the beere in charge and nede, and that he abode in worship.

In this thoughte Reynart cam out and sayde, Bruyn eme, ye be welcome, I herde you wel to fore, but I was in myn evesong, therfore have I the lenger taryed a lytyl. Dere eme, he hath don to you no good servyse, and I can hym no thank that hath sente you over this longe hylle, for I see that ye be al so wery that the swete renneth doun by your chekys; it was no nede, I had nenertheles comen to court to morowe, but I sorowe now the lasse, for your wyse counseyl shal wel helpe me in the court; and coude the kyng fynde none lasse messager but yow ffor to send hyther, that is grete wonder, for next the kynge ye be the mooste gentyl and richest of leeuys and of land. I wolde wel that we were now at the court, but I fere me that I shal not conne wel goo thyder, for I have eten so much new mete, that me thynketh my bely wylle breke or cleve asonder and by cause the mete was nyewe, I ete the more. Tho spack the bere, lyef neve, what mete have ye eten that maked yow so ful? Dere eme that I ete what myght it helpe yow that yf I tolde yow. I ete but symple mete, a poure man is no lord that may ye knowe, eme, by me; we poure folke muste ete oftymes suche as we gladly wolde not ete yf we had

better; they were grete hony combes which I muste nedes ete for hunger; they have made my bely so grete, that I can nowher endure. Bruyn tho spack anone, alas! Reynart what saye ye? sette ye so lytyl by hony? me ought to preyse and love it above all mete, lief Reynart helpe me that I myght gete a deel of this hony, and as longe as I lyve I shal be to you a tryew friende, and abyde by yow as ferre as ye helpe me, that I may have a parte of thys hony.

HOW BRUYN ETE THE HONY.

CAPITULO VIIJ.

Bruyn eme I had supposed that ye had japed ther wyth. So help me God, Reynard, nay, I shold not gladly jape with yow. Thenne spacke the rede Reynart, is it thenne ernest that ye love so wel the hony? I shal do late you have so much that ten of yow shold not ete it at one mele, myght I gete therwith your friendship. Not the ten, Reynerd neve, sayd the bere, how shold that be, had I alle the hony that is bytwene this and Portyngal I sholde wel ete it allone. Reynart sayde: What saye ye, eme? hier by dwelleth an husbondman named Lantfert which hath so moche hony that ye shold not ete it in vij. yere, whiche ye shal have in your holde, yf ye wille be to me friendly and helpyng agenst myn enemyes in the kynges court. Thenne promysed Bruyn the bere to hym, that yf he myght have his bely full, he wold truly be to hym to

fore all other a faythful frende ; herof laughed Reynart the shrewe, and sayde, yf ye wolde have vij hamber barelis ful I shal wel gete them and help you to have them. These wordes plesyd the bere so wel, and made hym so moche to lawhe, that he coude not well stand. Tho thought Reynart, this is good luck, I shal lede hym thyder that he shal lawhe by mesure.

Reynart sayd thenne, this mater may not be longe taryed. I muste payne my self for you, ye shal wel understande the very yonste and good wyl that I bere to you ward. I knowe none in al my lygnage that I nou wolde laboure fore thus sore. That thanked hym the bere, and thought he taryed longe. Now eme, late us goo a good paas and folowe ye me. I shal make you to have as moche hony as ye may bere. The foxe mente of good strokes, but the caytyf markyd not what the foxe mente, and they wente so longe to gydre, that they cam unto Lantferts yerde, tho was sir Bruyn mery. Now herke ; of Lantfert is it true that men saye, so was Lantfert a stronge carpenter of grete tymbre, and had brought that other day to fore in his yerde a grete oke whiche he had begonne to cleve ; and as men be woned, he had smeten two betels therin, one after that other, in suche wyse the oke was wyde open; wherof Reynart was glad, for he had founde it right as he wisshed, and sayde to the bere all lawhyng, see nou wel sharply to, in this tree is so moche hony that it is without mesure, asaye yf ye can come therin and ete but lytil, for though the hony combes be swete and good, yet beware that ye ete not to many, but take of

them by mesure, that ye cacche no harme in your body; for, swete eme, I shold be blamed yf they dyde you ony harme. What, Reynart cosyn, sorowe ye not for me, wene ye that I were a fole? mesure is good in alle mete. Reynart sayde, ye saye trouthe. Wherfore shold I sorowe? goo to thende and crepe theryn. Bruyn the bere hasted sore toward the hony, and trad in wyth his two formest feet, and put his heed over his eeris in to the clyft of the tree. And Reynart sprang lyghtly and brak out the betle of the tree. Tho helped the bere nether flateryng ne chydyng, he was fast shette in the tree; thus hath the neveu wyth deceyte brought his eme in pryson in the tree, in suche wyse as he coude not gete out wyth myght ne wyth crafte, hede ne foote.

What prouffyteth Bruyn the bere that he stronge and hardy is, that may not helpe hym; he sawe wel that he begyled was, he began to howle and to braye, and crutched wyth the hynder feet and made suche a noyse and rumour, that Lantfert cam out hastely, and knewe nothyng what this myght be, and brought in his hand a sharp hoke. Bruyn the bere laye in the clyfte of the tree in grete fere and drede, and helde fast his heed, and nyped both his fore feet, he wrange, he wrastled, and cryed, and all was for nought, he wiste not how he might gete out.

Reynart the foxe sawe fro ferre how that Lantfert the carpenter cam, and tho spack Reynart to the bere, Is that hony good? How is it now? Ete not to moche it shold do you harme, ye soold not thenne wel conne goo to the court; whan Lantfert cometh yf ye have wel

eten he shal yeve you better to drinke, and thenne it shal not styke in your throte.

After thise wordes tho torned hym Reynart toward his castel, and Lantfert cam and fonde the bere fast taken in the tree; thenne ran he faste to his neyghbors and sayde, Come alle in to my yerde, ther is a beere taken; the worde anone sprange oueral in the thorpe, ther ne bleef nether man ne wyf, but alle ranne theder as fast as they coude, everyche wyth his wepen; some wyth a staf, some wyth a rake, some wyth a brome, some wyth a stake of the hegghe and some wyth a flayel, and the preest of the chirche had the staf of the crosse, and the clerk brought a vane, the prestis wyf Julok cam wyth her dystaf, she sat tho and spanne. Ther cam olde wymen that for age had not one toeth in her heed. Now was Bruyn the bere nygh moche sorowe, that he allone muste stande ayenst them all: whan he herde alle this grete noyse and crye, he wrastled and plucked so harde and so sore, that he gate out his heed, but he lefte behynde alle the skyne and bothe his eeris in suche wyse that never man sawe fowller ne lothlyer beest, for the blode ran over his eyen, and or he coude gete oute his feet, he muste lete there his clawes or nayles and his roughe hande. This market cam to hym evyl, for he supposed neuer to have goon, his feet were so sore, and he myght not see for the blode whiche ran so over his eyen. Lantfert cam to hym wyth the preest, and forth with alle the parysshe, and began to smyte and stryke sore upon his heed and visage, he receyvd there many a sore stroke. Every man beware

hierby who hath harme and scathe, every man wil be ther at and put more to. That was wel seen on the bere, for they were alle fiers and wroth on the bere, grete and smal. Ye, Hughelyn wyth the croked lege, and Ludolf with the brode longe noose, they were booth wroth; that one had an leden malle, and that other a grete leden wapper, ther wyth they wappred and al forslyngred hym. Syr Bertolt with the longe fyngers, Lantfert, and Ottram the longe, thyse dyde to the bere more harme than al the other, that one had a sharp hoke, and that other a croked staf well leded on thende for to playe at the balle. Bactkyn ande Ave Abelquak, my dame Baue, and the preest with his staf, and dame Julok his wyf, thise wroughten to the bere so moche harme, that they wolde fayn have brought hym fro his lyf to deth: they smote and stacke hym al that they cowde. Bruyn the beere satte and syghed and groned, and must take suche as was gyven to hym, but Lantfert was the worthiest of byrthe of them alle, and made moste noyse, for dame Pogge of Chafporte was his moder, and his fader was Macob the stoppel maker, a moche stowt man. There as he was allone Bruyn receyved of hem many a caste of stones. Toforc hem alle sprang forth Lantefert's brother with a staf, and smote the bere on the heed that he ne herde ne sawe, and therewith the bere sprang vp bytwene the bushe and ryver emonge an heep of wyvis that he threw a deel of hem in the ryver which was wyde and depe; ther was the persons wyf one of them, wherfor he was ful of sorow, whan he sawe his wyf lye in the water

hym lusted no lenger to smyte the bere, but called, Dame Juloke in the water! now every man see to; alle, they that may helpe her, be they men or wymen I gyve to hem alle pardon of her penance and relece alle theyr synnes. All they thenne lette Bruyn the bere lye, and dyde that the preest badde.

Whan Bruyn the bere sawe that they ranne alle fro hym, and ranne to save the wymen, tho sprange he in to the water and swame all that he coude. Thenne made the preest a grete showte and noyse, and ran after the bere wyth grete anger and said, Come and torne agayne thow false theef. The bere swame after the beste of the streme, and lete them calle and crye, for he was glad that he was so escaped from them; he cursed and banned the hony tree, and the foxe also that had so betrayed hym, that he had cropen therin so depe that he loste boothe his hood and his eeris. And so forth he droof in the streem wel a ij or iij myle. Tho waxe he so wery that he wente to lande for to sitte and reste hym, for he was hevy, he groned and syghed, and the blode lepe over his eyen, he drough his breth lyke as one sholde have deyde.

Now herke how the foxe dyde: er he cam fro Lantferts hows he had stolen a fatte henne and had leyde her in his male, and ranne hastely away by a by path were he wende that no man shold have comen, he ranne toward the ryver that he swette, he was so glad that he wist not what to do for joye, for he hoped that the bere had be dede: he sayde, I have now wel spedde for he that sholde most have hyndred

me in the court is now dede, and none shal wyte me therof, may I not thenne by right be wel glad. With these wordes the foxe loked to the ryver ward and espyed where Bruyn the bere lay and rested hym. Tho was the foxe sorier and hevyer than he to fore was mery, and was as angry and sayde in chydyng to Lantfert, Alas Lantfert, lewde fool, God gyve hym a shames deth that hath loste such good venyson whiche is good and fatte, and hath late hym goo whiche was taken to his hand; many a man wolde gladly have eten of hym, he hath loste a riche and fatte bere. Thus al chydyng he cam to the ryver where he fonde the bere sore wounded, bebled, and right seke, whiche he myght thanke none better thereof than Reynart whiche spack to the bere in skorne, Chiere priestre, dieu vous garde. Wylle ye see the rede theef, sayde the bere to hym self, the rybaud and the felle diere here I se hym comen. Thenne sayd the foxe, have ye ought forgoten at Lantferts? have ye also payd hym for the hony combes that ye stale fro hym? yf ye have not, it were a grete shame and not honeste. I wyl rather be the messenger my self for to goo and paye hym; was the hony not good? I knowe yet more of the same prys. Dere Eme, telle me er I goo hens, in to what ordre wille ye goo, that ye were this newe hode. Were ye a monke or an abbot? he that shoef your crowne, hath nyped of your eeris, ye have lost your toppe, and don of your gloves. I trowe veryly that ye wyl go synge Complyn. Alle this herde Bruyn the bere, and wexe alle angry and sory for he myght not avenge hym; he lete the foxe saye his

wylle and wyth grete payne suffred it, and sterte agayne in the ryver, and swam doun wyth the streem to that other syde. Now muste he sorowe how that he sholde come to the court; for he had loste his eeris, and the skynne wyth the clawes of his forefeet. For though a man sholde have slayn hym he coude not go: and yet he muste nedes forth, but he wist not how. Now here how he dyde: he satte vpon his hammes, and began to rutsele ouer his tayle, and whan he was so wery, he wentled and tombled nyghe half a myle; this dyde he with grete payne so longe tyl atte laste he cam to the courte. And whan he was seen so comyng fro ferre, some doubted what it myght be that cam so wentelyng. The kyng atte laste knewe hym, and was not wel payd and sayde: This is Bruyn the bere my friende; who hath wounded hym thus? He is passyng reed on his heed; me thynketh he is hurte vnto the deth, where may he have ben? Therwyth is the bere come to fore the kynge and sayde.

THE COMPLAYNT OF THE BERE UPON THE FOXE.

CAP°. IX°.

I COMPLAYNE to yow, mercyful lorde, syre kynge, so as ye may see how that I am handled, prayeng you tavenge it upon Reynart the felle beest, for I have goten this in your seruyse, I have loste bothe my formest feet, my chekes and myn eeris by his false deceyte and

treson. The kynge sayde, How durst this fals theef Reynart doo this? I saye to yow Bruyn, and swere by my crowne, I shal so avenge you on hym, that ye shal conne me thanke. He sent for alle the wyse beestis, and desired counseyl how that he myght auenge this ouer grete wronge that the foxe had don. Thenne the counseyl concluded, olde and yong, that he shold be sente fore and dayed ernestly agayn, for tabyde suche jugement as shold there be gyven on hym of alle his trespaces; and they thought that the catte Tybert myght best do this message yf he wolde, for he is ryght wyse. The kynge thought this counceyl good.

HOW THE KYNGE SENTE ANOTHER TYME TYBERT THE CATTE FOR THE FOXE, AND HOW TYBERT SPEDDE WITH REYNART THE FOXE.

CA°. X°.

THENNE the kynge saide, Syr Tybert, ye shal now goo to Reynart and saye to hym, this seconde tyme, that he come to court vnto the plee for to answere, for though he be felle to other beestis he trusteth you wel, and shal doo by your counseyl; and telle, yf he come not, he shal have the thirde warnyng, and be dayed, and yf he thenne come not, we shal procede by ryght ayenste hym, and alle hys lygnage, wythout mercy. Tybert spack; My lord the kynge, they that this counseylde you were not my frendes, what shal I doo there? he

wyl not for me neyther come ne abyde, I beseche you, dere kynge, sende some other to hym, I am lytyl and feble, Bruyn the bere whiche was so grete and stronge coude not brynge hym, how shold I thenne take it on honde? Nay, said the kynge, sir Tybert, ye ben wyse and wel lerned. Though ye be not grete ther lyeth not on, many do more wyth crafte and connyng, than with myght and strengthe. Thenne, said the catte, syth it muste nedes be don, I muste thenne take it vpon me, God geve grace that I may wel achieve it, for my herte is hevy and evil willed therto. Tybert made hym sone redy toward Maleperduys, and he saw fro ferre come fleying one of Seynt Martyns byrdes; tho cryde he lowde and saide, Al hayl gentyl byrde, torne thy wynges hetherward and flee on my right side; the byrde flewh forth vpon a tree whiche stoode on the lift side of the catte, tho was Tybert woo, for he thought hit was a shrewd token and a sygne of harme, for yf the birde had flowen on his right side, he had ben mery and glad, but now he sorowed that his journey sholde torne to vnhappe. Nevertheles he dyde as many doo, and gaf to hymself better hope than his herte sayde; he wente and ronne to Maleperduys ward; and there he fonde the foxe allone standyng to fore his hous. Tybert saide, The riche God geve you good even, Reynart, the kyng hath menaced yow, for to take your lyf from yow, yf ye come not now wyth me to the court. Tho foxe then spack and saide, Tibert, my dere cosyn, ye be ryght wel come, I wolde wel truly that ye had moche good lucke. What

hurted the foxe to speke fayre, though he sayd wel his herte thoughte it not, and that shal be seen er they depart. Reynart sayde, wylle we this nyght be togydre, I wyl make you good chyere and to morow erly in the dawnyng we wyl to gydre goo to the court. Good neve late us so doo, I have none of my kyn, that I truste so moche as to yow, hier was Bruyn the bere the traytour he loked so shrewdly on one, and me thoughte he was so stronge, that I wolde not for a thousand marke have goon with hym, but cosyn I wil to morow erly goo with yow. Tybert saide, it is beste that we now goo, for the mone shyneth al so light as it were daye, I never sawe fayrer weder. Nay dere cosyn, suche myght mete vs by daye tyme that wold make us good chiere, and by nyghte paravanture myght doo us harme, it is suspecyous to walke by nyghte, therfore abyde this nyght here by me. Tybert sayde, wat sholde we ete yf we abode here? Reynart sayde, here is but lytle to ete, ye maye wel haue an hony combe good and swete, what saye ye Tybert? wyl ye ony therof? Tybert answerd, I sette nought therby; haue ye nothyng ellis? yf ye gaf me a good fatte mows, I shold be better plesyd. A fatte mows, said Reynard, dere cosyn what saye ye? here by dwelleth a preest and hath a barne by his hows therin ben so many myse, that a man sholde not lede them away upon a wayne, I have herd the preest many tymes complayne that they dyde hym moche harme. O dere Reyner, lede me thyder for alle that I may doo for yow. Ye, Tybert, saye ye me trouthe?

love ye wel myes? Yf I love hem wel, said the catte. I love myes better than ony thyng that men gyve me, knowe ye not that myes savoure better that veneson, ye than flawnes or pasteyes; wil ye wel doo, so lede me theder where the myes ben, and thenne shal ye wynne my love, ye al had ye slayn my fader, moder, and alle my kyn. Reynart sayde, ye moke and jape therwyth. The catte saide, so helpe me God I doo not. Tybert, said the foxe, wiste I that veryly, I wolde yet this nyght make that ye shuld be ful of myes. Reynart quod he, ful! that were many. Tybert ye jape. Reynart quod he in trouth I doo not, yf I hadde a fatte mows I wold not gyve it for a golden noble. Late vs goo thenne. Tybert, quod the foxe, I wyl brynge yow to the place. Er I goo fro you, reyner? Quod the foxe, vpon your sauf conduyt, I wolde wel goo wyth you to Monpelier. Late vs thenne goo, said the foxe, we tarye al to long. Thus wente they forth without lettyng to the place where as they wold be, to the prestes barne, whiche was faste wallid aboute withe a mude wal, and the nyght to fore the foxe had broken in and had stolen fro the preest a good fatte henne, and the preest alle angry had sette a gryn to fore the hool to avenge hym, for he wold fayn have take the foxe. This knewe wel the felle theef the foxe, and said, sir Tybert, cosyn, crepe in to this hool, and ye shal not longe tarye but that ye shal catche myes by grete heepis, herke how they pype. Whan ye be ful, come agayn; I wil tarye here after you, be fore this hole, we wil to morowe goo to gyder to the court. Tybert

why tarye ye thus longe? come of, and so maye we retorne sone to my wyf, whiche wayteth after vs, and shal make vs good chiere. Tybert saide, Reynart cosyn is it thenne your counseyl that I goo in this hole. Thise prestes ben so wyly and shrewyssh, I drede to take harme. O ho Tybert, said the fox, I sawe you never so sore afered, what eyleth yow? The catte was ashamed and sprange in to the hoole, and anon he was caught in the gryn by the necke er he wyste, thus deceyuyd Reynart his ghest and cosyn. As Tybert was waer of the grynne, he was a ferde and sprange forth, the grynne wente to, thenne began he to wrawen for he was almost ystranglyd, he called, and cryed, and made a shrewd noyse. Reynart stode to fore the hool and herde al, and was wel a payed and sayde, Tybert, love ye wel myes? be they fatte and good? knewe the preeste herof or Mertynet, they be so gentyl that they wolde brynge yow sawce: Tybert ye synge and eten, is that the guyse of the court? if Ysegrym ware there by yow in suche reste as ye now be thenne shold I be glad, for ofte he hath don me scathe and harme. Tybert coude not goo awaye, but he mawede and galped so lowde that Martynet sprang vp, and cryde lowde, God be thanked! my gryn hath taken the theef that hath stolen our hennes, aryse vp we wil rewarde hym.

Wyth these wordes arose the preest in an evyl tyme and waked alle them that were in the hows, and cryde wyth a lowyde vois, the foxe is take; there leep and ranne alle that there was, the preest

hymself ranne al moder naked. Mertynet was the first that cam to Tybert, the preest toke to Locken his wyf an offryng candel, and bad her lyght it atte fyer and he smote Tybert with a grete staf. Ther receyued Tybert many a grete stroke over all his body; Mertynet was so angry that he smote the catte an eye out, the naked prest lyfte vp and shold have gyven a grete stroke to Tybert, but Tybert that sawe that he muste deye, sprange bytwene the prestes legges wyth his clawes and with his teeth, so that that leep becam yl to the preest and to his grete shame.

Whan dame Julocke knewe that, she sware by her faders sowle, that she wolde it had cost her alle thoffryng of a hole yere, that the preest had not had that harme, hurte, and shame, and that it had not happed and said, In the develes name was the grynne there sette, see Mertynet lyef sone: this is a grete shame and a grete hurte, though he be heled herof. The foxe stode wythoute to fore the hole and herde alle thyse wordes, and lawhed so sore that he vnnethe coude stonde; he spack thus al softly, dame Julock be al stylle, and lete your grete sorowe synke. He shal doo wel ynowh, ther is in the world many a chapel in whiche is rongen but one belle. Thus scorned and mocked the foxe the prestes wyf dame Julock, that was ful of sorowe. The preest fyl doun a swoune, they toke hym vp and brought hym agayne to bedde. Tho wente the foxe agayn in to his borugh ward, and lefte Tybert the catte in grete drede and jeopardye, for the foxe wiste none other but that the catte was

nygh deed; but when the catte sawe them al besy aboute the preest, tho began he to byte and gnawe the grinne in the myddel a sondre, and sprange out of the hool and wente rollyng and wentlyng towards the kyngs court: or he cam theder it was fayr day and the sonne began to ryse. And he cam to the court as a poure wyght; he had caught harme atte prestes hows by the helpe and counseyl of the foxe, his body was al to beten, and blynde on the one eye. Whan the kynge wyste this, that Tybert was thus arayed, he was sore angry and menaced Reynart the theef sore, and anone gadred his counseyl to wyte what they wold avyse hym, how he myght bringe the foxe to the lawe, and how he sholde be fette. Tho spack sir Grymbart, whiche was the foxes suster sone, and saide, Ye lordes, thowgh myn eme were twyes so bad and shrewessh, yet is there remedye ynough, late hym be don to as to a free man whan he shal be judged, he muste be warned the thirde tyme for al, and yf he come not thanne he is thenne gylty in alle the trespaces that ben leyd ayenst hym and his, or complayned on. Grymbert, who wolde ye that sholde goo and daye hym to come, who wil aventure for hym his eeris, hys eye, or his lyf, whiche is so fel a beest. I trowe ther is none here so moche a fool. Grymbart spack, so helpe me God I am so moche a fool, that I wil do this message my self to Reynart, yf ye wille commande me.

HOW GRYMBERT THE DASSE BROUGHT THE FOXE TO LAWE TO FORE THE KYNGE.

CAPITULO XJº.

Now go forth Grymbart and see wel to fore yow, Reynart is so felle and fals and so subtyl, that ye nede wel to loke aboute yow, and to beware of hym. Grimbert said, he shold see wel to. Thus wente Grymbart to Maleperduys ward, and whan he cam theder, he fonde Reynart the foxe at home, and dame Ermelyn his wyf laye by her whelpis in a derke corner. Tho spack Grymberd and salewed his eme, and his aunte, and saide to Reynart, Eme, beware that your absence hurte yow not in suche maters as be leyde and complayned on yow, but yf ye thynke it good, it is hye tyme that ye come wyth me to the court. The wythholdyng yow fro it can doo yow no good, there is moche thynge complayned over yow, and this is the thirde warnyng, and I telle you for trouth yf ye abyde to morow al day, ther may no mercy helpe you, ye shal see that wythin thre dayes that your hows shal be byseged al aboute, and ther shal be made to fore it galowes and racke, I saie you truly ye shal not thenne escape, neyther with wyf ne wyth chylde. The kynge shal take alle your livys fro yow, therfore it is beste that ye goo wyth me to the court, your subtyl wyse counseyl shal paraventure avaylle you, ther ben gretter aventures falle er this, for it may happe ye shal goo quyte of all the complayntes that ben complayned on you, and alle your enemyes shal abyde in the shame, ye have oftymes

don more and gretter thinges than this. Reynart the foxe answered, Ye saye soth, I trowe it is beste that I goo wyth you for ther lacketh my counseyl, paraventure the kynge shal be mercyful to me yf I maye come to speke wyth hym, and see hym under his eyen, though I had don moche more harme, the court may not stonde without me, that shal the kynge wel understande. Though some be so felle to me ward, yet it goth not to the herte, alle the counseyl shal conclude moche by me, where grete courtes ben gadred of kynges or of grete lordes, where as nedeth subtyl counseyl, ther muste Regnart fynde the subtyl meanes. They maye wel speke and saye theyr advys but the myne is beste, and that goth to fore alle other. In the courte ben many that have sworen to doo me the werst they can: and that causeth me a parte to be hevy in my herte, for many maye doo more than one allone that shal hurte me, nevertheless, nevew, it is better that I goo with yow to the court, and answere for myself, than to sette me, my wyf, and my chyldren in a venture for to be loste: aryse up, late us goo hens, he is over myghty for me, I muste doo as he wylle, I can not bettre it, I shal take it paciently and suffre it. Reynert saide to his wyf, dame Ermelyn I betake yow my chyldren that ye see wel to hem, and specyally to Reynkyn, my yongest sone. He belyketh me so wel I hope he shal folowe my stappes, and ther is Rosel a passyng fayr theef. I love hem as wel as any may love his chyldren. Yf God gyve me grace that I may escape, I shal whan I come agayn thank yow wyth fair

wordes. Thus toke Reynart leue of his wyf. A gods, how sorouful abode Ermelyn wyth her smale whelpis, for the vytayller, and he that sorowed for Maleperduys has goon his way. And the hows not pourveyed ne vitaylled.

HOW REYNARD SHROF HYM.

CAPITULO XLJ.

Whan Reynart and Grymbert had goon a whyle togydre, tho saide Reynart, Grete cosyn, now am I in grete fere, for I goo in drede and ieopardye of my lyf. I have so moche repentaunce for my synnes that I wil shryve me dere cosyn to yow, here is none other preest to gete, yf I were shryven of my synnes, my soule shold be the clerer. Grymbert ansuerde, Eem, wil ye shryve you, then muste ye promyse first to leve your steelyng and rovynge. Reynart saide that wyst he wel. Now herke, dere cosyn, what I shal saye. Confiteor tibi, pater, of alle the misdedes that I have don, and gladly will receyve penance for them. Grymberte sayde, What saye ye? wylle ye shryve you? thenne saye it in English, that I may understande yow. Reynard sayde, I have trespaced ayenst alle the bestis that lyve, in especyal ayenst Bruyn the bere, myne eem, whom I mayde his crowne al blody; and taughte Tybert the catte to catche myes, for I made her leepe in a grenne wher she was al to beten; also I have

trespaced gretly ayenst Chanticlere with his children, for I have made hym quyte of a grete dele of hem. The kynge is not goon al quyte. I have sklandered hym and the quene many tymes, that they shall never be cleer therof; yet have I begyled Ysegrym the wulf ofter than I can telle wel: I have called hym eme, but that was to deceyve hym, he is nothing of my kyn. I made hym a monke, Eelmare, where I my self also becam one. And that was to his hurte and no prouffyte. I mayde bynde his feet to the belle rope; the ryngyng of the belle thought hym so good that he wolde lerne to rynge, wherof he had shame, for he range so sore that alle the folke in the strete were aferd therof and mervaylled what myght be on the belle; and ranne thyder to fore he had comen, to axe the religyon, wherfore he was beten almost to the deth. After this I taught hym to catche fyssh where he receyvid many a stroke; also I ledde hym to the richest prestes hows that was in Vermedos. This preest had a spynde wherin henge many a good flitche of bacon; wherin many a tyme I was wonte to fyl my bely, in this spynde I had made an hole, in whiche I made Ysegrym to crepe. There fonde he tubbes wyth beef and many good flytches of bacon, wherof he ete so moche withoute mesure, that he myght not come out at the hole where he wente in; his bely was so grete and ful of the mete, and whan he entred his bely was smal. I wente in to the village and made there a grete showte, and noyse, yett herke what I dyde, thenne I ranne to the preest, where he satte at the table and ete,

and hadde to fore hym as fatte capone as a man myght fynde. That capone caught I, and ranne my weye therwith al that I myghte. The preest cryed out and said, Take and slee the foxe: I trowe that never man sawe more wonder: The foxe cometh in my hows and taketh my capoone fro my table: Where saw ever man an hardyer theef? And, as me thought, he toke his table knyf and casted it at me, but he touched me not. I ranne away; he shoof the table from hym, and folowed me cryeng, Kylle and slee hym. I to goo and they after, and many moo cam after, whiche alle thought to hurte me. I ranne so longe that I cam where as Isegrym was, and there I lete falle the capone, for it was to hevy for me, and ayenst my wille I lefte it there; and thenne I sprange thurgh an hole where as I wolde be; and as the preest toke vp the capone, he espyede Isegrym, and cryde, Smyte doun here, frendes; here is the theef, the wulf, see wel to that he escape vs not. They ranne alle togydre wyth stokkes and staues, and made a grete noyse that alle the neyghbours camen oute, and gauen hym many a shrewde stroke, and threwe at hym grete stones, in suche wyse that he fyl doun as he had ben deed. They slepid hym and drewe hym ouer stones and ouer blockes wythout the village and threwe hym in to a dyche, and there he laye al the nyght. I wote neuer how he cam thens. Syth I haue goten of hym, for as moche as I made hym to fylle his bely, that he sware that he wolde be myn helpe an hole yere. Tho ledde I hym to a place where I tolde hym ther were vij. hennes and a cocke, whiche

satte on a perche and were moche fatte. And ther stode a faldore by, and we clymmed ther vp. I sayde to hym, yf he wolde bileue me, and that he wolde crepe in to the dore, he sholde fynde many fatte hennes. Isegrym wente al lawhyng to the dore ward, and crope a lityl in, and tasted here and there, and at laste he sayde to me, Reynarde, ye borde and iape with me, for what I seche I fynde not. Thene, said I, Eme yf ye wyl fynde, crepe forther in, he that wil wynne, he muste laboure and auenture; they that were wonte to sitte there, I haue them a waye. Thus I made hym to seche ferther in, and shooue hym forth so ferre, that he fylle doun vpon the floer, for the perch was narow, and he fill so grete a falle, that they sprange vp alle that slepte; and they that laye nexte the fyre cryden that the valdore was open, and somthyng was falle, and they wiste not wat it myght be. They roose vp and lyghte a candel, and whan they sawe hym they smeton, beton, and wounded hym to the deth. I have brought hym thus in many a jepardye, moo than I can now rekene. I sholde fynde many moo yf I me wel bythoughte, whiche I shal telle you here after. Also, I have bydryuen wyth dame Erswynde his wyf. I wolde I had not don it: I am sory for it: hit is to her grete shame, and that me repenteth. Grymbert saide, Eme, I vnderstande you not: ye shryue you as though ye helde somwhat behynde. I wote not what ye mene, ne where ye haue lerned this langage. He sayde, I haue trespaced with his wyf. Ach dere Eme, it were grete shame yf I sholde saye it oppenly as it happed. I have

leyen by myn aunte. I am your Eme, I shold angre you yf I spak vylanye of wymmen. Neueu, now haue I told you alle that I can thynke on, sette me penaunce and assoylle me, for I haue grete repentaunce.

Grymbert was subtyl and wyse, he brake a rodde of a tree and saide, Eme, now shal ye smyte yourself thryes with this rodde on your body; and thenne leye it doun vpon the grounde, and sprynge thre tymes ther ouer without bowyng of your legges, and wythout stomblyng, and thenne shal ye take it vp and kysse it frendly, in token of mekenes and obedience of your penance that I gaf yow: herwith be ye quyte of alle synnes that ye haue don to this day, for I forgeue it yow al. The foxe was glad. Tho, sayd Grymbert to his eme, Eme, see now forthon that ye doo good werkis, rede your psalmes, goo to chirche, faste and kepe your halydayes, and gyue your allmesse, and leue your synful and yl lyf, your thefte and your treson, and so maye ye come to mercy. The foxe promysed that he wold so doo, and thenne wente they both to gydre to the court ward. A lytel besyde the waye as they wente, stode a cloyster of black nonnes, where many ghees, hennes, and capones wente withoute the walles; and as they wente talkynge, the foxe brought Grymbert out of the right waye thyder: and wythout the walles, by the barne wente the polayle. The foxe espyed them, and saw a fatte yong capone which wente allone fro his felaws, and lepp and caught hym that the fethers flewh aboute his eeris, but the capone escaped. Grymbert sayde, what Eme, cursyd man, what wil ye

doo? wille ye for one of thise poletes falle agayn in alle your synnes of whiche ye haue shryuen yow? ye ought sore repent you. Reynart answerd, Truly cosyn, I had al forgoten; praye God that he forgeue it me, for I wil neuer do so more. Thene torned they agayn ouer a lityl brydge, yet the foxe alway loked after the polaylle, he coude not refrayne hym self, that whiche cleuid by the bone, myght not out of the flesshe; though he shold be hanged, he coude not lete the lokyng after the polayll as fer as he myght see them. Grymbert sawe his maner, and sayde, Fowle false deceyuour, how goo your eyen so after the poleyl. The foxe sayde, Cosyn, ye mysdoo to saye to me ony suche wordes; ye brynge me out of my deuocion and prayers. Late me saye a Pater Noster for alle the fowles of polaylle and ghees that I have betrayed, and ofte wyth falsheed stolen from thyse holly nonnes. Grymbert was not wel a payd, but the foxe had ever his eyen toward the polayl, til atte laste they cam in the waye agayn. And thenne torned they to the court warde. How sore quaked tho Reynard whan they aproched the court, for he wiste wel that he had for to answere to many a fowle feet and theft that he had doon.

HOW THE FOXE CAM TO THE COURT, AND HOW HE EXCUSED HYM TOFORE THE KYNGE.

CAPITULO XIIJ.

At the first whan it was knowen in the court that Reynart the foxe, and Grymbaert his cosyn were

[illegible] to the court that was come to prove out of Robin of Rymes and Jenkin, but that he made haste away for to complain to Rymes the king. Rymes [illegible] he had not been slain, and [illegible] better than he was, for he made both proudly with his sword through the great throng of the court, right as he had been the king's son, and as he had not [illegible] to say than the value of an hour, and came to the sight of the place standing to [illegible]. Now the king said, God give you good honour and worship, there was never king that ever had a truer servant than I have been to your good grace and you so. Nevertheless, dere lorde, I know well that there be many in this court that would destroy me yet ye would believe them; but nay, God thanke you, but it is not [illegible] to your courage to believe false [illegible] and your [illegible]. To God more it be accomplished how that false [illegible] and traitors now a days in the [illegible] court have more favour and [illegible] the [illegible] and false [illegible] be [illegible] up for to be so good men as the [illegible] and noble king [illegible]. Dere lorde, God shall [illegible] them their [illegible]. The king said, Fye, Rymes, false thief and traitor, how will you be [illegible] [illegible] false [illegible]; and [illegible] and [illegible] you a traitor, more ye with your [illegible] wolden to be my friends, ye have no other servant nor so ye now shall well [illegible]. The pees that I have commanded and ordained, that have ye well [illegible], false [illegible]. Dameselle, [illegible] no longer be myne, but myne, false! what have I to [illegible] here

Be stylle Chaunteclere, holde your mouth, late mē answere this fowle theef. Thow shrewd felle theef, saide the kynge, thou saist that thou louest me wel; that hast thou shewd wel on my messagers these poure felaws, Tibert the cat, and Bruyn the bere, whiche yet ben al blody, whiche chyde not, ne saye not moche, but that shal this day coste the thy lyf. In nomine Patris, Cristi, filii, sayd the foxe, dere lord, and myghty kyng, yf Bruynes crowne be blody, what is that to me; whan he ete hony at Lantferts hows in the vyllage, and dyde hym hurte and scathe, there was he beten therfore; yf he had willyd, he is so stronge of lymmes, he myght wel haue be auengid er he sprang in to the water. Tho cam Tybert the catte, whom I recyued frendly; yf he wente out without my counseyl for to stele myes to a prestes hows, and the prest dyde hym harme, sholde I abye that? thenne myght I say I were not happy. Not so my liege lorde, ye maye doo what ye wille, thowh my mater be cleer and good, ye may siede me, or roste, hange or make me blynde, I may not escape you; we stonde alle vnder your correccion. Ye be myghty and stronge, I am feble, and my helpe is but smal. Yf ye put me to the deth, hit were a smal vengeance.

Whiles they thus spak, sprange vp Bellyn the rame, and his eme Dame Olewey, and saide, My lord the kynge, here our complaynt; Bruyn the bere stode up wyth al his lygnage and his felaws: Tibert the catte, Isegrym the wulf, Kywart the hare, and Panther the boore, the camel and Brunel the

ghoos, the kyde and ghoot, Boudewyn the asse, Borre the bulle, Hamel the oxe, and the wesel, Chantecler the cock, Pertelot with alle theyre children, alle thise made grete rumour and noyse, and cam forth openly to fore their lorde the kynge; and made that the foxe was taken and arested.

HOW THE FOXE WAS ARESTED, AND JUDGED TO DETH.

CAPITULO XIIJJ.

HERE vpon was a parliament, and they desired that Reynart sholde ben deed, and what somme euer they saden ayenst the foxe, he answerde to eche to them. Neuer herde man of suche playntis of wyse counseyl, and subtyl inuencions: and on that other syde, the foxe made his excuse so wel and formably theron, that they that herde it wondred therof. They that herde and sawe it, may telle it forth for trouthe. I shal short the mater, and telle yow forth of the foxe. The kynge and the counseyl herde the witnessis of the complayntes of Reynarts mysdedes; hit wente with hem as it ofte doth, the feblest hath the worst. They gafe sentence and juged that the foxe sholde be dede and hanged by the necke; tho lyste not he to pleye alle his flateryng, wordes and deceytes coude not helpe hym. The jugement was gyven and that muste be don. Grymbert his neueu, and many of his lignage myght not fynde in their hertes to see hym dye, but token leue soroufully, and romed the court. The kynge bithoughte hym and marked how many a yong-

ling departed from thens al wepyng, which were nyghe of his kynne, and sayde to hymself, Hier behoueth other counseyl herto; though Reynart be a shrewe, ther be many good of his lignage. Tybert the catte sayde, sir Bruyn and Sir Isegrym, how be ye thus slowe, it is almost euen, hier ben many busshes and hedges, yf he escaped from vs and were delyuerd out of this paryl, he is so subtyl and so wyly and can so many deceytes, that he shold neuer be taken agayn. Shal we hange hym? now stonde ye al thus, er the galewis can be made redy it shal be nyght.

Isegrym bethought hym tho and seyde, hierby is a gybet or galewis, and wyth that worde he sighed, and the catte espyed that and sayed, Isegrym, ye be aferd, ys it ayenst your wylle? Thynke ye not that he hymself wente and laboured that bothe your brethern were hanged? were ye good and wyse, ye sholde thanke hym, and ye sholde not ther with so longe tarye.

HOW THE FOXE WAS LEDDE TO THE GALEWIS.

CAPITULO XV.

Isegrym balked and sayde, ye make moche a doo, sir Tybert; hadde we an halter whiche were mete for his necke and stronge ynough, we shold sone make an ende. Reynart the foxe, whiche longe had not spoken, saide to Isegrym, Short my payne. Tyberte hath a stronge corde whiche caught hym in the prestes hous, whan he bote the preste. He can clyme wel and is

swift, late hym bere vp the lyne. Isegrym and Bruyn, thys becometh yow wel, that ye thus doo to your neuew. I am sory that I lyue thus longe: haste you, ye be sette therto; it is euyl doo that ye tarye thus longe: goo to fore Bruyn ande lede me; Isegrym, folowe faste, and see wel to and beware that Reynart go not away. Tho, sayd Bruyn, it is the best counseil that I euer yet herde, that Reynart there seith.

Isegrym commanded anon and badde his kyn and frendes, that they shold see to Reynart that he escaped not, for he is so wyly and fals. They helden hym by the feet, by the berde, and so kepte hym that he escaped not from hem. The foxe herde alle thyse wordes, whiche touchid hym nygh, yet spak he and sayde, Och dere Eme, me thynketh ye payne your self sore, for to doo to me hurte and scathe; yf I durste I wolde praye you of mercy, thaugh my hurte and sorow is playsant to you. I wote wel yf myn aunte your wyf bethought her wel of olde ferners, she wolde not suffre that I shold haue ony harme; but now I am he, that now ye wille doo on me what it shal plese yow; ye, Bruyn and Thibert, God gyue you shames deth, but ye doo to me your werst, I wote wherto I shal, I maye deye but ones, I wolde that I were dede alredy. I sawe my fader deye; he had sone donne. Isegrym sayde, Lete vs goo, for ye curse vs bi cause we lengthe the tyme, euyl mote he fare yf we abyde ony lenger. He wente forth wyth grete enuye on that one side, and Bruyn stoode on the other syde, and so lede they hym forth to the galowes warde. Tybert ranne with a good wil

to fore, and bare the corde, and his throte was yet sore of the grynne, and his croppe dyde hym woo of the stryke that he was take in, that happed by the counseil of the foxe, and that thought he now to quyte.

Tybert, Isegrym, and Bruyn, wente hastely wyth Reinert to the place there as the felons ben wonte to be put to deth. Nobel the kynge, and the quene, and alle that were in the court, folowed after for to see the ende of Reynart. The foxe was in grete drede yf hym myshapped, and bethought hym ofte, how he myghte saue hym fro the deth, and tho thre, that so sore desireden hys deth how he myght deceyue them, and brynge them to shame; and how he myght brynge the kynge wyth lesyngis for to holde wyth hym ayenst hem. This was alle that he studyed, how he myght putte away his sorowe wyth wylys; and thought thus, though the kynge and many one be vpon me angry, it is no wonder, for I have wel deseruid it; neuertheles, I hope for to be yet his best frende, and yet shal I neuer do them good. How strong that the kynge be, and how wyse that his counseil be, yf I may brouke my wordes, I knowe so many an inuencion, I shal come to myn above, as fer as they wolde comen to the galewes. Tho saide Ysegrym, Sir Bruyn thynke now on your rede crowne whiche by Reynarts mene ye caughte; we haue now the tyme that we may wel reward hym. Tybert clyme vp hastyly and bynde the corde faste to the lynde, and make a rydynge knotte or a strope, ye be the lyghtyst. Ye shal this day see your wylle of hym. Bruyn see wel to that he escape

not, and holde faste; I will helpe that the ladder be sette vp, that he may goo vpwart theron. Bruyn saide, Do, I shall helpe hym wel. The foxe sayde, now may my herte be wel heuy for grete drede; for I see the deth to fore myn eyen, and I may not escape. My lorde the kynge, and dere quene, and forth alle ye that here stande, er I departe fro this worlde, I pray you of a bone, that I may to fore you alle make my confession openly, and telle my defaultes also clerly, that my sowle be not acombred, and also that no man hereafter, bere no blame for my thefte, ne for my treson; my deth shal be to me the esyer, and praye ye alle to God that he haue mercy on my sowle.

HOW THE FOXE MADE OPENLY HIS CONFESSION TO FORE THE KYNGE, AND TO FORE AL THEM THAT WOLD HERE IT.

CAPITULO XVJ.

ALL they that stoden there, had pyte when Reynart saide the wordes; and said it was but a lytel requeste yf the kynge wolde grante it hym; and they prayde the kynge to graunte it hym. The kynge gaf hym leue. Reynart was wel glad, and hoped that it myght falle better, and said, thus, Now helpe, Spiritus Domini, for I see hier no man, but I have trespaced vnto. Neuertheles yet was I, vnto the tyme that I was wened fro the tete, one the beste chylde that coude onwher be founden. I wente tho and pleyde wyth the lambees by cause I herde hem gladly blete; I was so long,

wyth hem, that at the laste I bote one, there lerned I fyrst to lapen of the bloode: hit sauourd wel; me thought it right good. And after I began to taste of the flessh therof, I was lycourous, so that after that I wente to the gheet in to the wode, there herde I the kyddes blete, and I slewe of them tweyne. I began to wexe hardy. After I slew hennes, polayl, and ghees, where euer I fonde hem. Thus worden my teeth al blody. After this I wexe so felle, and so wroth, that what somme euer I founde that I myght ouer, I slowe alle. Ther after cam I by Isegrym now in the wynter, where he hydde hym vnder a tree, and rekened to me that he was myn Eme. Whenne I herde hym thenne rekene allyance, we becomen felaws, which I may wel repente; we promysed eche to other to be trewe, and to vse good felawship, and began to wandre to gyder: he stal the grete thyngs, and I the smalle, and all was comyn bytwene vs; yet he made it so, that he had the beste dele, I gate not half my parte. Whan that Ysegrym gate a calf, a ramme, or a weder, thenne grimmed he, and was angry on me, and droof me fro hym, and helde my part and his to, so good is he. Yet this was of the leste: but, whan it so lucked, that we toke an oxe or a cowe, thenne cam therto his wyf wyth vij children, so that vnto me myght vnnethe come one of the smallest rybbes; and yet had they eten alle the flessh therof, ther with all muste I be content. Not for that I had so grete nede, for I have so grette scatte, and good, of syluer and of gold, that seuen waynes shold not conne carye it away. Whan the

kynge herde hym speke of this grete good and riches, se he brenned in the desyre and couetyse therof, and sayde, Reynart, where is the rychesse becomen, tell me that.

The foxe saide, My lorde I shal telle you. The rychesse was stolen, and had it not be stolen, it shold haue cost you your lyfe, and you shold haue ben murdered, whiche God forbede, and shold haue ben the gretest hurte of the worlde. Whan the quene herde that she was sore aferde, and cryde lowde, Alas! and wele away, Reynart what saye ye? I coniure you by the longe way that your soule shal goo, that ye telle vs openly the trouthe herof, as moche as ye knowe of this grete murdre, that sholde haue be doon on my lorde, that we alle may here it. Now herkene how the foxe shal flatre the kynge and quene, and shal wynne bothe their good willes and loue; and shal hyndre them that laboure for his deth; he shal vnbynde his packe and lye, and by flaterye and fayr wordes, shal brynge forth so his maters, that it shal be supposed for trouthe. In a syrrowful contenance spak the foxe to the quene, I am in suche caas now, that I muste nedes deye; and hadde ye me not so sore conjured, I will not jeoparde my sowle; and yf I so dyde, I shold goo therfore in to the payne of helle. I wil saye nothyng, but that I wil make it good; for pytously he shold haue ben murthred of his owen folke; neuertheles they that were most pryncypal in this feat, were of my next kyne, whom gladly I wold not bewraye, yf the sorow were not of the helle. The kynge was heuy of

herte and saide, Reynart, saiste thou to me the trouthe? Ye, said the foxe, See ye not how it standeth with me? Wene ye that I wil dampne my sowle? what shold it auaylle me, yf I now saide other wise than trouthe: my deth is so nyghe, ther may nether prayer ne good helpe me. Tho trembled the foxe by dyssymlyyng, as he had ben aferde. The quene had pyte on hym, and prayde the kyng to haue mercy on hym, in eschewyng of more harme; and that he sholde doo the peple holde their peas, and gyue the foxe audience, and here what he shold say. Tho commanded the kynge openly, that eche of them shold be stylle, and suffre the foxe to saye vnberisped what that he wolde. Thenne saide the foxe, Be ye now alle stylle, syth it is the kynges wille, and I shal telle you openly this treson; and therin I wil spare noman that I knowe gylty.

HOW THE FOXE BROUGHT THEM IN DAUNGER, THAT WOLDE HAUE BROUGHT HYM TO DETH, AND HOW HE GATE THE GRACE OF THE KYNG.

CAPITULO XVIJ.

Now harkene how the foxe began. In the begynnyng he appeled Grymbert his dere cosyn, which euer had holpen hym in his nede; he dyde so, bycause his wordes sholde be the better byleued, and that he forthon myght the better lye on his enemyes. Thus began he firste, and said, My lord, my fader had founden kyng Ermeryks tresour doluen in a pytte; and whan he had

thys grete good, he was so proude and orguillous, that he had alle other beestis in despyte, whiche to fore had been his felaws. He made Tybert the catte, to go in to that wylde lande of Ardenne to Bruyn the bere, for to do to hym homage, and bad hym saye yf he wolde be kynge, that he shold come in to Flaundres. Bruyn the bere was glad hierof, for he had longe desired it, and wente forth in to Flaundres, where my fader receyued hym right frendly. Anone he sente for the wyse Grymbert myn neuewe, and for Ysegrym the wulfe, and for Tybert the catte. Tho these fyue camen, bytwene Gaunt and the thorpe, callyd Yfte. There they helden their counseyl an hole derke nyght longe. What with the deuels helpe and craft, and for my faders richesse they concluded, and swore there the kyngys deth. Now herkene, and here this wonder; the foure sworen vpon Ysegryms crowne, that they sholde make Bruyn a kynge and a lorde; and brynge hym in the stole at Akon, and sette the crowne on his heed; and, yf there were ony of the kynges frendes, or lignage, that wolde be contrarye or ayenst this, hym sholde my fader wyth his good and tresour fordryue, and take from hym his myght and power. It happed so, that on a morow tyde erly, that Grymbert my neuew, was of wyne almost dronke, that he tolde it to dame Sleopcade his wif in counseyl, and badde her kepe it a secrete, but she anone forgate it, and saide it forth in confession to my wyf, vpon an heth where they both wenten a pylgremage; but she must firste swere by her trouthe, and by the holy thre kynges of Coleyn, that for loue, ne for hate, she sholde neuer telle it forth, but kepe it

secrete. But she helde it not, and kepte it no longer secrete, but tyl she cam to me; and she thenne tolde to me alle that she herde, but I must kepe it in secrete; and she tolde me so many tokenys, that I felte wel it was trouthe; and for drede and fere, myn heer stode right vp, and my herte becam as heauy as leed, and as colde as ise. I thought by this, a lyknesse whiche hier a fore tyme byfylle to the frosshis, which were free; and complayned that they had none lorde, ne were not bydwongen, for a comynte without a gouuernour was not god; and they cryden to God with a lowde voys, that he wolde ordeyne one that myght rewle them. This was al that they desired. God herde theyr requeste, for it was resonable, and sent to them a storke, whiche ete and swolowed them in as many as he coude fynde: he was alway to hem vnmercyful. Tho complayned they theyr hurte, but thene it was to late; they that were to fore free, and were aferde of no body, ben now bonde and muste obeye to strengthe theyr kynge; hyerfore, ye riche and poure, I sorowed that it myght happen vs in lyke wyse. Thus, my lord the kyng, I haue had sorowe for you, wherof ye can me but lytyl thanke. I knowe Bruyn the bere, for suche a shrewe and raveneur, wherfor I thoughte yf he were kynge, we shold be all destroyed and loste. I knowe our souerain lord the kyng, of so hye byrthe, so myghty, so benygne and mercyful, that I thought truly it had ben an euyl chaunge for to haue a foule stynkynge theef, and to refuse a noble, myghty, stately lyon, for the bere hath more madde folye in his vnthrifty heed, and al his anncestris, than

ony other hath. Thus had I in myn herte, many a sorowe; and thought alway, how I myght breke and fordoo my faders fals counseyl, which of a chorle and traytour, and worse than a theef, wolde make a lorde, and a kynge. Alway I prayd God, that he wolde kepe our kyng in worship, and good helthe, and grante hym long lyf; but I thought wel, yf my fader helde his tresour, he sholde with his fals felaws, wel fynde the waye that the kyng shold be deposed, and set a syde. I was sore bethought, how I myght beste wyte where my faders good laye; I awayted at al tymes, as nygh as I coude, in wodes, in bushes, in feeldis, where my fader leyde his eyen; were it by nyght or by daye, colde or weet, I was alway by hym, to espye and knowe where his tresour was leyde. On a tyme, I laye doun al pat on the grounde, and sawe my fader come rennyng out of an hole. Now herke what I sawe hym doo. Whan he cam out of the hole, he loked fast a boute, yf ony body had seen hym; and, whan he coude no wher none see, he stopped the hole with sande, and made it euen and playn, lyke to the other grounde by. He knewe not that I sawe it: and where his footspore stood, there stryked he with his tayl, and made it smothe with his mouth, that no man shold espy it. That lerned I there of my fals fadre, and many subtylitees, that I to fore knewe nothyng of. Thenne departed he thens, and ran to the village warde, for to doo his thyngis; and I forgate not, but sprange and lepe to the hole ward; and how wel that he had supposed, that he had made al faste, I was not so moche

a fool, but that I fonde the hole wel, and cratched and scraped with my feet the sand out of the hole, and crepte therin; There fonde I, the moste plente of siluer, and of golde, that euer I sawe. Hier is none so olde, that euer so much sawe, on one heep, in alle his lyf. Tho toke I Ermelyne, my wife, to helpe, and we ne rested, nyght ne day, to bere and carye awaye with grete labour, and payne, this riche tresour, in to another place, that laye for vs better, vnder an hawe in a depe hole. In the mene whyle, that myn housewyf and I thus labouryd, my fader was with them, that wolde betraye the kynge. Now may ye here what they dede. Bruyn the bere, and Ysegrym the wulf, sente alle the londe aboute; yf ony man wolde take wages, that they shold come to Bruyn, and he wolde paye them their souldye or wagis to fore: My fader ranne ouer alle the lande, and bare the lettres. He wist lytil that he was robbed of his tresour, ye though he myght haue wonnen al the world, he had not conne fynde a peny therof. Whan my fader had ben ouer al in the lande, bytwene the Elue, and the Somme; and hadde goten many a souldyour, that shold the next somer haue comen to helpe Bruyn, tho cam he agayn to the bere, and his felowis, and tolde them, in how grete auenture he had be tofore the borughes, in the londe of Saxone; and how the hunters dayly ryden, and hunted with houndes after hym, in suche wise, that he vnnethis escaped with his lyf. Whan he had tolde this to thise foure false traytours, thenne shewde he them lettres, that plesyd moche to Bruyn; there in

were wreton xii. c., of Ysegryms lignage by name, withoute the beres, the foxes, the cattes, and the dasses. All thise had sworn, that wyth the first messager that shold come for them, they shold be redy, and come for to helpe the bere, yf they had their wages a moneth to fore. This aspyed I; I thanke God. After thise wordes, my fader wente to the hole, where his tresour had leyn, and wolde loke vpon it. Tho began he a grete sorowe, of that he soughte he fonde nothyng: He fonde his hole broken, and his tresour born a way. There dede he that I may wel sorowe, and bewaylle; for grete anger and sorowe, he wente and hynge hym self. Thus abode the treson of Bruyn, by my subtylte, after. Now see myn infortune; thise traytours, Ysegrym, and Bruyn, ben now most preuy of counseyl aboute the kynge, and sytte by hym on the hye bouche; And I, poure Reynart, have no thanke ne reward. I haue buryed myn owen fader, by cause the kynge sholde haue his lyf. My lorde, saide the foxe, where ben they that so wolde doo, that is to destroye them self for to kepe yow.

The kynge, and the quene, hoped to wynne the tresour, and wythout counceyl, toke to them Reynart, and prayde hym that he wold do so wel, as to telle them were this tresour was. Reynart saide, how shold I telle the kynge, or them that wolde hange me, for love of the traytours, and murderars, which by her flaterye, wolde fayne brynge me to deth. Shold I telle to them wher mye good is, thenne were I out of my wytte. The quene tho spak, Nay, Reynart, the kyng shal lete you haue

your lyf, and shal al to gydre forgyue you, and ye shal be fro hens forth wyse, and true to my lorde. The foxe answerd to the quene, Dere lady, yf the kynge wil beleue me, and that he wil pardone, and forgyue me alle my olde trespaces; ther was neuer kynge so riche, as I shal make hym, for the tresour, that I shal doo hym haue, is right costely, and may not be nombred. The kynge saide, Ach dame, wille ye beleue the foxe; sauf your reuerence, he is borne to robbe, stele, and to lye, this cleuid to his bones, and can not be had out of the flessh. The quene saide. Nay, my lorde, ye may now well byleue hym; though he were heretofore felle, he is now changed otherwise than he was. Ye haue wel herde, that he hath appechid his fader, and the dasse, his neuew, whiche he myght wel haue leyde on other bestes, yf he wolde haue ben false, felle, and a lyar. The kynge saide, Dame, wille ye thenne haue it soo, and thynke ye it best to be don, though I supposed it sholde hurte me, I will take alle thise trespaces of Reynart vpon me, and bileue his wordes. But I swere by my crowne, yf he euer here after mysdoo and trespace, that shal he dere abye, and all his lignage vnto the ix. degree. The foxe loked on the kyng stoundmele, and was glad in his herte, and saide, My lorde, I were not wyse, yf I sholde saye thynge that were not trewe. The kynge toke vp a straw fro the ground, and pardoned, and forgaf the foxe, all the mysdedes, and trespaces, of his fader, and of hym also. Yf the foxe was tho mery, and glad, it was no wonder, for he was quyte of his deth, and was all free, and franke, of alle his enemyes.

The foxe saide, My lorde, the kynge, and noble lady, the quene, God rewarde yow, thys grete worship that ye do to me, I shal thynke, and also thanke you for hit, in suche wise, that ye shal be the richest kynge of the world; for ther is none lyuyng vnther the sonne, that I vouchesauf better my tresour on, than on yow bothe. Thenne toke the foxe vp a straw, and profred it to the kyng, and saide, My moste dere lord, plese it yow to receyue hiere, the ryche tresour, whiche kynge Ermeryk hadde, for I gyue it vnto yow, wyth a fre wylle, and knowleche it openly. The kynge receyuid the straw, and threwe it meryly fro hym, with a joyous visage, and thanked moche the foxe.

The foxe laughed in hym self. The kynge thenn herkenede after the counseyl of the foxe, and alle that ther were, were at his wylle. My lorde, sade he, herkene, and marke wel my wordes; in the west side of Flaundres, ther standeth a woode, and is named Hulsterlo, and a water that is called Kerekenpyt lyeth therby. This is so grete a wyldernesse, that ofte in an hole yere man ner wyf cometh therin, sauf they that wil, and they that wille not eschewe it; there lyeth this tresour hydde. Understande wel, that the place is called Krekenpit; for I aduyse you for the lesste hurte, that ye and my lady goo bothe thyder, for I knowe none so trewe, that I durste on your behalue truste, wherfore goo your self. And whan ye come to Krekenpyt, ye shal fynde there, two birchen trees standyng alther next the pytte. My lorde, to the byrchen trees shal ye goo, there lyeth the tresour vnther doluen.

There muste ye scrape, and dygge a way a lytyl, the mosse on the one side; Ther shalle ye fynde many a jewel of golde, and syluer; and there shal ye fynde the crowne, whiche kynge Ermeryk ware in his dayes; that sholde Bruyn the bere have worn, yf his wyl had gon forth. Ye shal see many a costly jewel, with riche stones sette in golde werk, whiche coste many a thousand marke. My lorde, the kynge, whan ye now haue all this good, how ofte shal ye saye in your herte and thynke, O how true art thou Reynart, the foxe, that with thy subtyl wytte, daluyst and hyddest here this grete tresour; God gyue the good happe, and welfare, where euer thou be.

The kynge sayde, Sir Reynart, ye muste come and helpe vs to dygge vp this tresour; I knowe not the way; I sholde neuer conne fynde it. I haue herde ofte named, Parys, London, Akon, and Coleyn. As me thynketh, this tresour lyeth right as ye mocked and japed, for ye name Kryekenpyt, that is a fayned name. These wordes were not good to the foxe, and he sayd with an angry mode, and dyssymyled and saide; Ye, my lord, the kynge, ye be also nyghe, that as fro Rome to Maye. Wene ye that I wille lede yow to flomme Jordayn. Nay, I shal brynge you out of wenyng, and shewe it you by good wytnes. He called lowde, Kywart, the hare, come here to fore the kynge. The bestes sawe alle thyder ward, and wondred what the kynge wold. The foxe sayde to the hare, Kywart, ar ye a colde? How tremble ye, and quake so? be not aferd, and telle my lorde, the kynge, here the trouthe; And that I

charge you, by the fayth and trouthe, that ye owe hym, and to my lady, the quene, of suche thyng as I shal demande of you. Kywaert saide, I shal saye the trouthe, though I shold lose my necke therfore, I shal not lye, ye haue charged me so sore, yf I knowe it. Thenne saye, knowe ye not where Keriekenpyt standeth; is that in your mynde? The hare saide, I knewe that wel, xii. yer a goon, wher that standeth, why aske ye that? It standeth in a woode, named Hulsterto, vpon a warande, in the wyldernesse. I haue suffred there moche sorowe for hunger and for colde; ye more than I can telle. Pater Symonet the friese, was woned to make there false money, wherwyth he bare hym self out, and al his felawship; but that was to fore er I had felawship with Ryn the hounde, whiche made me escape many a daunger, as he coude wel telle yf he were here, and that I neuer in my dayes trespaced agenst the kynge, other wyse than I ought to doo with right. Reynart sayd to hym, Go agayne to yonder felawship, here ye, Keyward: my lorde, the kynge desyreth no more to knowe of yow. The hare retorned and wente agayn to the place he cam fro. The foxe sayde, My lord, the kynge, is it trewe that I saide. Ye, Reynart, said the kynge, forgyue it me. I dyde euyl that I beleuid you not. Now Reynart, frende, fynde the waye that ye goo wyth vs to the place and pytte, where the tresour lyeth. The foxe saide, it is a wonder thyng wene ye, that I wolde not fayne goo wyth yow, yf it were so with me that I myght goo with yow, in suche wise

that it no shame were vnto your lordshyp, I wold goo; but, nay, it may not bee: herkene what I shal saye, and muste nedes thaugh it be to me vylonye and shame. Whan Isegrym the wulf, in the deuels name, wente in to religion and become a monke, shorn in the ordre, tho the prouende of sixe monkes was not suffycient to hym, and had not ynough to ete; he thenne playned and waylled so sore, that I had pyte on hym; for he becam slowe and seke, and bycause he was of my kynne I gaf hym counseyl to renne away, and so he dyde; wherfore I stonde a cursed, and am in the Popes banne and sentence. I wil to morow, bytymes, as the sonne riseth, take my waye to Rome for to be assoyled, and take pardon, and fro Rome I wil ouer the see in to the holy lande, and wil neuer retorne agayn til I haue doon so moche good, that I may with worship goo wyth yow; hyt were greet repref to you, my lord, the kyng, in what londe that I accompanyed you, that men shold saye, ye reysed and accompanyed your self with a cursyd and a persone agravate.

The kynge sayde, Sith that ye stand a cursyd in the censures of the chirche, yf I wente wyth you, men sholde arette vilonye vnto my crowne; I shal thenne take Kywaert, or somme other, to goo with me to Krykenpytte, and I counseylle you, Reynart, that ye put your self out of this curse. My lord, qd. the foxe, therfore wylle I goo to Rome, as hastely as I may: I shal not reste by nyght ner day, til I bee assoylled. Reynart, said the kynge, me thynketh ye ben torned in to a good waye; God gyue you grace taccomplyssh

wel your desyre. Assons as this spekyng was don, Noble, the kyng, wente and stode vpon an hygh stage of stone, and commanded silence to alle the bestes, and that they shulde sytte doun in a rynge rounde vpon the grasse, eueriche in his place, after his estate and byrthe. Reynart the foxe stode by the quene, whom he ought wel to loue. Thenne said the kynge, Here ye alle, that be poure and riche, yong and olde, that stondeth here, Reynart, one of the heed offycers of my hows, had don so euyl, whiche this daye shold haue ben hanged, hath now in this courte don so moche, that I and my wyf, the quene, haue promysed to hym our grace and frendshyp. The quene hath prayde moche for hym; in so moche that I haue made pees wyth hym, and I gyf to hym his lyf, and membre, freely agayne; and I comande you, vpon your lyf, that ye doo worship to Reynart, his wyf, and to his chyldren, where someuer ye mete hem, by day or by nyght; and I wil also here no moo complayntes of Reynard; yf he hath heirtofore mysdon, and trespaced, he wil no more mysdo, ne trespace, but now bettre hym; he wylle to morowe erly goo to the Pope for pardon and foryeuenes of alle hys synnes; and forth ouer the see to the Holy Lande, and he wil not come agayn til he brynge pardon of alle his synnes.

This tale herde Tyselyn the rauen, and leep to Ysegrym, to Bruyn, and to Tybert, there as they were, and saide, Ye caytyfs, how goth it now ye vnhappy folke, what do ye here? Reynard the foxe is now a squyer, and a courtyer, and right grete and myghty in

the court. The kynge hath skylled hym quyte of alle his brokes, and forgyuen hym alle his trespaces and mysdedes, and ye be alle betrayed and apechyd. Ysegrym saide, How may this be? I trowe Tyselyn that ye lye. I do not certaynly, saide the rauen. Tho wente the wulf, and the bere, to the kynge. Tybert, the catte, was in grete sorowe, he was so sore aferde, that for to haue the foxes frendship, he wold wel forgyue Reyner the losse of his one eye, that he loste in the prestes hows; he was so woo, he wist not what to doo, he wolde wel that he neuer had seen the foxe.

HOW THE WULF AND THE BERE WERE ARESTYD BY THE LABOUR OF REYNART THE FOXE.

CAPITULO XVIIJ.

YSEGRYM cam proudly ouer the felde to fore the kynge, and he thanked the quene, and spack, wyth a felle moed, ylle wordes on the foxe, in suche wyse, that the kynge herde it, and was wroth, and made the wulf and the bere anon to be arestyd. Ye sawe neuer wood dogges do more harme than was don to them; they were bothe fast bounden, so sore, that, alle that night, they myght not stere hande ne foot; they myght scarsely rore, ne meue ony joynte.

Now here how the foxe forth dyde: he hated hem; he laboured so to the quene, that he gate leue for to haue as moche of the beres skyn vpon his ridge as a

foote longe and a foot brode for to make hym therof a scryppe. Thenne was the foxe redy yf he had foure stronge shoon.

Now here how he dyde for to gete these shoon. He said to the quene, Madame, I am youre pylgrym, here is myn eme, sir Isegrym, that hath iiij. strong shoon, whiche were good for me, yf he wolde late me haue two of them, I wolde on the waye besyly thynke on your sowle; for it is right that a pylgrym shold alway thynke and praye for them that doo him good. Thus maye ye doo your sowle good, yf ye wyll. And also, yf ye myght, gete of myn aunte, dame Eerswyn, also two of her shoon to gyue me; she may well doo it, for she gooth but lytil out, but abydeth alway at home. Thenne, sayde the quene, Reynard, yow behoueth wel suche shoes, ye may not be wythout them; they shal be good for you to kepe your feet hool for to passe with them many a sharpe montayn, and stony roches; ye can fynde no better shoes for you, than such as Ysegrym and his wyf haue and were, they be good and stronge; though it sholde touche their lyf, eche of them shal gyue you two shoes, for to accomplissh wyth your hye pilgremage.

HOW YSEGRYM AND HIS WYF ERESWYN MUST SUFFRE HER SHOIS TO BE PLUCKED OF, AND HOW REYNARD DYDE ON THE SHOYS FOR TO GOO TO ROME WYTH.

CAPITULO XIX.

Thus hath this false pylgrym goten fro Ysegrym ij.

shooes fro his feet, which were haled of the clawes, to the senewis; ye sawe neuer foule that men rosted laye so stylle as Ysegrym dyde, whan his shoes were haled of he styred not; and yet his feet bledde. Thenne whan Ysegrym was unshoed, tho muste dame Eerswyn, his wyf, lye doun in the grasse wyth an heuy chere, and she loste ther her hynder shoes. Tho was the foxe glad, and saide to his aunte, in scorne, My dere aunte, how moche sorow haue ye suffred for my sake, whiche me sore repenteth, sauf this herof I am glad, for ye be the lyeuest of alle my kyn, therefore I wyl gladly were your shoen. Ye shal be partener of my pylgremage, and dele of the pardon that I shal, with your shoen, fecche ouer the see.

Dame Erswyne was so woo that she vnnethe myght speke; neuertheles, this she sayde, A Reynart, that ye now al thus haue your wyl, I pray God to wreke it! Ysegrym and his felaw, the bere, helden their pees and wheren al stylle. They were euyl at ease, for they were bounden and sore wounded; had Tybert, the catte, haue ben there, he shold also somwhat haue suffred, in suche wyse, as he sholde not escaped thens wythout hurte and shame. The next day, whanne the sonne aroos, Reynard thenne dyde grece his shoes, whiche he had of Ysegrym and Erswyn, his wyf, and dyde hem on, and bonde hem to his feet; and wente to the kynge and to the quene, and said to hem with a glad chere, Noble lord and lady, God gyue you good morow! and I desire of your grace, that I may haue male and staff, blessyd as belongeth to a pilgrym.

Thenne the kynge, anone, sent for Bellyn the ramme, and whan he cam he saide, Sir Bellyn, ye shal do masse to fore Reynart, for he shal goo on pylgremage, and gyue to hym male and staf. The Ram answerd agayn, and said, My lord, I dare not do that, for he hath said that he is in the Pope's curse. The kynge said, what therof? Mayster Gelys hath said to vs, yf a man had doo as many synnes as al the world, and he wold those synnes forsake, shryue hem, and resseyue penance, and do by the prestes counseyl, God wil forgyue them, and be mercyful vnto hym; now wil Reynard goo ouer the see, in to the Holy Lande, and make hym clere of al hys synnes.

Thenne ansuerd Bellyn to the kynge: I wil not doo litil ne moche herin, but yf ye saue me harmles in the spirituel court byfore the bysshop Prendelor and to fore his archedeken Loosuynde and to fore sir Rapiamus his offycyal. The kynge began to wexe wroth and saide, I shal not bydde you so moche in halfe a yere: I had leuer hange you than I sholde so moche praye you for it. Whan the rame sawe that the kynge was angry, he was so sore aferd that he quoke for fere, and wente to the awter and sange in his bookes and radde suche as hym thought good ouer Reynart, whiche lytyl sette ther by, sauf that he wold haue the worship therof. When Bellyn the ramme had alle sayd his seruyse deuoutly, thenne he hynge on the foxes necke a male couered wyth the skynne of Bruyn the bere, and a lytil palster therby: tho was Reynart redy toward his journey. Tho loked he toward the kynge as he had

ben sorowful to departe and fayned as he had wepte, right as he hadde yamerde in his herte, but yf he had ony sorow, it was by cause al the other, that were there, were not in the same plyght as the wulf and bere were brought in by hym. Neuertheles he stood and prayd them alle to praye for hym, lyke as he wold praye for them. The foxe thought that he taryed longe, and wold fayn haue departed, for he knewe hymself gylty. The kynge saide, Reynart I am sory ye be so hasty, and wil no lenger tarye. Nay my lorde, it is tyme, for we ought not spare to doo wel. I praye you to gyue me leue to departe, I muste doo my pylgremage. The kynge sayd, God be wyth yow! and commanded alle them of the court to go, and conueyne Reynart on his way. Sauf the wulf and the bere, whyche fast laye bounden, ther was none that durst be sory therfore; and yf ye had seen Reynart how personably he wente wyth his male, and palster on his sholder, and the shoes on his feet, ye shold haue laughed. He wente and shewde hym outeward wysely; but he laughed in his herte, that alle they brought hym forth, whiche had a lytyl to fore been with hym so wrooth; and also the kynge, whiche so moche hated him, he had made hym suche a fool, that he brought hym to his owne entente, he was a pylgrym of deux aas. My lord the kyng, sayd the foxe, I pray you to retorne agayn; I wil not that ye goo ony ferther with me; ye myght haue harme therby; ye haue there two morderars arestyd, yf they escaped you, ye myght be hurt by them. I pray God

kepe you fro mysaventure. Wyth these wordes he stode up on his afterfeet, and prayde alle the beestys grete and smal, that wolde be parteners of his pardon, that they shold praye for hym ; they sayde that they alle wolde remembre him.

Then departed he fro the kynge so hevyly, that many of them ermed.

Thenne saide he to Kyward the hare, and to Bellyn the ramme, meryly, Dere frendes, shal we now departe? Ye wil, and God will, accompanye me ferther ; ye two made me never angry ; ye be good for to walke wyth, courtoys, frendly, and not complayned on of ony beeste ; ye be of good condicions, and goostly of your lyuyng ; ye lyue both as I dyde, whan I was a recluse ; yf ye haue leeuis and gras, ye be plesyd ; ye retche not of brede, of flesshe, ne suche maner mete. With such flateryng wordes hath Reynard thise two flatred, that they wente wyth hym tyl they camen to fore his hows Maleperduys.

HOW KYWART THE HARE WAS SLAYN BY THE FOXE.

CAPITULO XX.

WHAN the foxe was come to fore the yate of his hows, he sayde to Bellyn the ramme, Cosyn ye shal abide here withoute, I and Kywart wille goo in, for I wille praye Kywart to helpe me to take my leue of Ermelyn, my wif, and to comforte her and my chyldren. Bellyn sayde, I praye hym to comforte them wel.

Wyth suche flateryng wordes brought he the hare in to his hole in an euyl hour. There founde they dame Ermelyn, lyeng on the grounde, with her yonglyngis, whiche had sorowed moche for drede of Reynart's deth; but whan she sawe hym come she was glad. But whan she sawe his male and palster, and espyed his shoes, she meruailled and sayd, Dere Reyner, how haue ye spedd? He sayd, I was arestid in the court, but the kynge lete me gow. I muste goo a pilgremage. Bruyn the bere, and Ysegrym the wulf, they be plegge for me; I thanke the kynge, he hath gyuen to vs Kywart hier for to doo with hym what we wyl. The kynge saide hym self, that Kywart was the first that on vs complayned; and by the fayth that I owe yow, I am right wroth on Kywart.

Whan Kywart herde thise wordes, he was sore aferde. He wold haue fledde, but he might not, for the foxe stode bytwene hym and the yate, and he caught hym by the necke. Tho cryed the hare, Helpe Bellyn, helpe! where be ye? this pilgryme sleeth me. But that crye was sone doon, for the foxe had anon byten his throte a two. Tho sayd he, Late vs go ete this good fatte hare. The yonge whelpes cam also. Thus helde they a grete feste, for Kywart had a good fatte body. Ermelyn ete the flessh and dranke the blood; she thanked ofte the kynge that he had made them so mery. The foxe saide, Ete as moche as ye maye, he wil paye for it, yf we will feche it. She sayd, Reynart I trowe ye moche: telle me the trouthe, how ye be departed thens. Dame, I haue so flaterid the

the kinge and the quene, that I suppose the frendship bytwene vs shal be right thynne whan he shal knowe of this; he shal be angry; and hastely seke me for to hange me by myne necke.

Therfore late vs departe, and stele secretly a way in somme other foreste, where we may lyue wythoute fere and drede; and there that we may lyue vij yere and more and fynde vs not. There is plenty of good mete of partrychs, wododekkis, and moche other wilde fowle, dame; and yf ye wil come with me thyder, ther ben swete welles and fayr clere rennyng brokes. Lord God, how swete eyer, is there; there may we be in pees, and ease, and lyue in grete welthe, for the kynge hath lete me gon, by cause I tolde hym that ther was grete tresour in Krekenpyt; but there shal he fynde nothyng, though he sought euer. This shal sore angre hym, whan he knoweth that he is thus deceyuid; what trowe ye how many a grete lesynge, muste I lye, er I coude escape from hym. It was harde that I escaped out of pryson; I was neuer in gretter paryl, ne nerrer my deth. But how it euer goo, I shal by my wille neuer more come in the kynges daunger: I haue now goten my thombe out of his mouth; that thanke I my subtylyte.

Dame Ermelyne saide, Reynart, I counseyle that we goo not into another foreste, where we sholde be strange, and elenge; we haue here al that we desyre: and ye be here lorde of our neyghbours: wherfore shalle we leue this place, and auenture vs in a worse: we may abyde her sure ynough. If the kynge wold

doo vs ony harme, or besiege vs, here ben so many by or side holes, in suche wyse, as we shal escape fro hym: in abydyng here, we may not doo amys; we knowe alle bypathes ouer alle; and er he take vs with myght, he muste haue moche helpe therto. But that ye haue sworen, that ye shal goo ouer see, and abide there, that is the thyng that toucheth me moste. Nay, dame, care not therfore; how more forsworn how more forlorn. I wente ones with a good man, that said to me, that a bydwogen oth, or oth sworn by force, was none oth. Though I wente on this pilgremage, it shold not auaylle me a cattes tayl. I wil abyde here, and folowe your conseyl. Yf the kyng hunte after me, I shal kepe me as wel as I maye; yf he be me to myghty; yet I hope wyth subtylte to begyle hym. I shal vnbynde my sack, yf he wil seeke harm he shal fynde harme.

Now was Bellyn the ramme angry, that Kywart, his felawe, was so longe in the hole; and called lowed, Come out, Kywarte, in the deuels name! how longe shal Reynart kepe you there. Haste you, and come late vs goo.

Whan Reynard herde this, he wente out, and saide softly to Bellyn the ramme, Lief Bellyn, wherfore be ye angry? Kywart speketh wyth his dere aunte; me thynketh ye ought not to be dysplesid therfore. He bad me saye to yow, ye myght wel go to fore, and he shal come after: he is lighter of fote than ye, he muste tarye a whyle wyth his aunte, and her chyldren; they wepe, and crye, by cause I shal

goo fro them. Bellyn sayde, What dyde Kyward? me thoughte he cryed after helpe. The foxe answerd, What saye ye Bellyne? wene ye that he shold haue ony harme. Now herke what he thenne dyde; whan he were comen in to myn hows; and Ermelyn, my wyf, vnderstode that I sholde goo ouer see, she fyl doun in a swoun. Thenne sayde the ramme, In fayth I vnderstode that Kywart had ben in grete daunger. The foxe sayde, Nay, truly or Kyward shold haue ony harme in my hows, I had leuer that my wyf and chyldren sholde suffre moche hurte!

HOWE THE FOXE SENTE THE HEED OF KYWART THE HARE TO THE KYNGE, BY BELLYN THE RAMME.

CAPITULO XXJ.

THE foxe saide, Bellyn, remembre ye not that yesterday the kynge and his counseyl commanded me, that er I shold departe out of this lande, I shold sende to hym two lettres. Dere cosyn, I pray you to bere them: they be redy wreton. The ramme sayde, I wote neuer yf I wiste that your endythyng and wrytyng were good, ye myght pareuenture so moche praye me that I wold bere them, yf I had ony thyng to bere them in. Reynard saide, ye shal not fayle to haue somwhat to bere them in. Rather than they shold be vnborn, I shal rather gyue yow my male, that I bere, and put the kynges lettres therin, and hange them aboute your necke. Ye shal haue of the kynge

grete thanke therfore and be right welcomen to hym. Ther vpon Bellyn promysed hym to bere thise lettres.

Tho retorned Reynart in to his hows, and toke the male and put therin Kywarts heed ; and brought it to Bellyn for to brynge him in daunger ; and henge it on his necke ; and chargyd hym not for to loke in the male, yf he wolde haue the kyngis frendship : and yf ye wil that the kynge take you into his grace, and loue you ; saye that ye your self haue made the lettre and endited it ; and haue gyuen the counseyl that it is so wel made and wreton. Ye shal haue grete thank, therfore. Bellyn the ramme was glad herof, and thought he sholde haue grete thank, and saide, Reynard, I wote wel that ye now doo for me. I shal be in the court gretly preysed, whan it is knowen that I can so wel endyte and make a lettre, thaugh I can not make it: ofte tymes it happeth, that God suffreth somme to haue worship ; and thanke of the labouris, and connyng of other men ; and so it shal bifalle me now. Now what counseyle ye, Reyner ? shal Kywaert the hare come wyth me to the court ? Nay, sayd the foxe, he shal anone folowe yow ; he may not yet come, for he muste speke wyth his aunte.

Now goo ye forth to fore, I shal shewe to Kywart secrete thyngis whiche ben not yet knowen. Bellyn sayd, Fare wel, Reynart ! and wente hym forth to the court ; and he ran, and hasted so faste, that he cam to fore mydday to the court ; and founde the kynge in his palays wyth his barons.

The kynge meruaylled whan he saw hym brynge

the male agayn, whiche was made of the beres skyn. The kynge saide, Saye on, Bellyn, fro whens come ye? where is the foxe? how is it that he hath not the male with hym? Bellyn sayd, My lord, I shal saye yow al that I know. I accompayned Reynard vnto his hows; and whan he was redy; he asked me yf that I wold for your saacke bere two lettres to yow. I saide for to do you playsir and worship, I wold gladly bere to yow vij: tho brought he to me this male, wherein the lettres be; whiche ben endyted by my connyng, and I gaf counseyl of the makyng of them. I trowe ye sawe neuer lettres better, ne craftelyer made, ne endyted. The kynge commanded anon, Bokart his secretarye, to rede the lettres; for he vnderstode al maner langages. Tybert the catte, and he, toke the male of Bellyns necke; and Bellyn hath so ferre sayd, and confessyd; that he therfore was dampned.

The clerke Bokart undyde the male; and drewe out Kywarts heed; and said, Alas! what lettres ben these? certaynly, my lord, this is Kywarts heed. Alas, sayde the kynge, that euer I beleuid so the foxe. There myght men see grete heuynesse of the kynge, and of the quene. The kyng was so angry, that he helde longe doun his heed; and atte last after many thoughtes he made a grete crye; that alle the bestys were aferde of the noyse. Tho spack, Sir Firapeel, the lupaerd, whiche was sybbe somwhat to the kynge, and saide: Sire kyng, how make ye suche a noyse; ye make sorow ynough thaugh the quene were deed. Late this sorowe goo; and make good chere: it is grete shame; be ye

not a lorde and kynge of this londe. Is it not alle vnder yow, that here is. The kynge sayde, Sir Firapeel, how shold I suffre this: one false shrewe and deceyuar hath betrayed me, and brought me so ferre, that have I forwrought, and angred my frendes, the stoute Bruyn the bere, and Ysegrym the wulf; whiche sore me repenteth: and this goth ayenst my worship, that I haue done amys ayenst my beste barons; and that I trusted and beleuid so moche the fals horeson the foxe; and my wyf is cause therof: she prayde me so moche, that I herde her prayer, and that me repenteth; thaugh it be to late. What thawh, sir kyng, said the lupaerd, yf ther be ony thyng mysdon, it shal be amended: we shal gyue to Bruyn, the bere, to Ysegrym the wulf, and to Erswyn his wyf, for the pece of his skynne, and for their shoes, for to haue good pees, Bellyn the ramme; for he hath confessyd hym self, that he gaf counseyl, and consentyd to Kywardes deth; it is reson, that he abye it. And we alle shal goo feeche Reynard and we shal areste hym, and hange hym by the necke, without lawe or jugement: and ther with alle shal be contente.

HOW BELLYN THE RAMME AND ALLE HIS LIGNAGE WERE GYVEN IN THE HANDES OF YSEGRYM AND BRUYN, AND HOW HE WAS SLAYN.

CAPITULO XXIJ.

The kynge saide, I wil do it gladly. Firapeel, the lupaerd, wente tho to the pryson, and vnbonde them

firste: and thenne, he sayde, Ye sires, I brynge to you a faste pardon, and my lordes loue, and frendship; it repenteth hym, and is sory, that he euer hath don, spoken, or trespaced, ayenst you: and therfore ye shal haue a good appoyntement. And also amendes he shal gyue to you; Bellyn the ramme, and alle his lignage, fro now forthon to domesdaye, in suche wyse that wheresomeuer ye fynde them in fele or in wode, that ye may frely byte, and ete them, wythout ony forfayte. And also the kynge graunteth to yow that ye maye hunte, and do the werst that ye can to Reynard, and alle his lygnage, wythoute mysdoyng. This fayr grete pryuelage wylle the kynge graunt to you, euer to holde of hym. And the kynge wille, that ye swere to hym, neuer to mysdoo, but doo hym homage, and feawte: I counseil yow to doo this; for ye may doo it honorably.

Thus was the pees made by Fyrapel, the lupaerd, frendly and wel. And that coste Bellyn the ramme his tabart, and also his lyf. And the wulfis lignage holde thise preuilegis of the kynge; and in to thys daye, they deuoure and ete Bellyns lignage, where that they may fynde them. This debate was begonne in an euyl tyme; for the pees coude neuer syth be made betwene them. The kynge dyde forthwyth his courte and feste, lengthe xij. dayes lenger for loue of the bere, and the wulf. So glad was he of the makyng of the pees.

HOW THE KYNGE HELDE HIS FEESTE, AND HOW LAPREEL THE CONY COMPLAYNED VNTO THE KYNGE VPON REYNART THE FOXE.

CAPITULO XXIIJ.

To this grete feste cam al maner of bestis: for the kynge dyde to crye this feste ouer alle in that londe. Ther was the moste joye, and myrthe, that euer was seen emonge beestis. Ther was daunsed manerly the houe daunce with shalmouse, trompettis, and alle maner of menestraylsye. The kynge dyde do ordeyne, so moche mete, that euerych fonde ynough. And ther was no beest in al his lande so grete ne so lytyl but he was there: and ther were many fowles and byrdes also: and alle they that desired the kynges frendship were there, sauyng Reynard the foxe, the rede false pilgrym, whiche laye in a wayte to doo harme; and thoughte it was not good for hym to be there. Mete and drinke flowed there. Ther weere playes, and esbatemens. The feest was ful of melodye. One myght haue luste to see suche a feeste; and right as the feeste had dured viij dayes, a boute mydday, cam in the cony, Lapreel, to fore the kynge, where he satte on the table, with the quene; and sayde, al heuyly, that all they herde hym that were there, My lorde, haue pyte on my complaynt, whiche is of grete force, and murdre, that Reynard the foxe wold haue don to me. Yester morow as I cam rennyng by his borugh at Malepertuys he stode byfore his dore without lyke a pylgryme. I supposed to haue passed by hym peasi-

bly, toward this feste, and whan he sawe me come, he came ayenst me, sayeng his bedes; I salewed hym; but he spack not one worde; but he raught out his right foot and dubbed me in the necke betwene myn eeris, that I had wende I sholde haue loste my heed. But, God be thanked! I was so lyght, that I sprange fro hym. Wyth moche payne cam I of his clawes. He grymmed, as he had ben angry, bycause he helde me no faster. Tho I escaped from hym, I loste myn one ere, and I had foure grete holes in my heed, of his sharpe nayles, that the blood sprange out; and that I was nyhe al a swoun; but for the grete fere of my lyf I sprange and ran so faste fro hym, that he coude not ouertake me. See my lord, thise grete woundes, that he hath made to me, with his sharpe long nayles. I praye you, to haue pite of me, and that ye wil punysshe this false traytour, and morderar; or ellis shal ther no man goo, and comen, ouer the heth in saefte, whyles he haunteth his false and shrewde rewle.

HOW CORBANT THE ROKE COMPLAYNED ON THE FOXE FOR THE DETH OF HIS WYF.

CAPITULO XXIIIJ.

Ryght as the cony had made an ende of his complant, cam in Corbant the roke, flowen in the place to fore the kynge; and sayde, Dere lorde, here me: I brynge you hier, a piteous complaynt: I wente to day by the morow wyth Sharpebek my wyf for to playe vpon the heth, and there laye Reynart the foxe doun

on the grounde, lyke a dede keytyf. His eyen stared and his tonge henge longe out of his mouth, lyke an hounde had ben deed. We tasted and felte his bely, but we fonde theron no lyf. Tho wente my wyf and herkened, and leyde her ere to fore his mouth, for to wite yf he drewe his breeth: whiche mysfylle her euyl, for the false felle foxe awayted wel his tyme, and whan he sawe her so nygh hym, he caught her by the heed and boote it of.

Ther was I in grete sorowe, and cryde lowde, Alas! alas! what is there happed. Then stode he hastely vp, and raught so couetously after me, that for feere of deth I trembled and flewh vpon a tree therby, and sawe fro ferre how the false keytyf ete and slonked her in, so hungerly that he lefte neyther flessh ne bone, no more but a fewe fethers; the smal fethers he slange them in wyth the flessh: he was so hungry he wolde wel haue eten tweyne. Tho wente he his strete. Tho flewh I doun wyth grete sorow, and gadred up the fetheris for to shewe them to you here. I wolde not be agayn in suche peryl and fere as I was there, for a thousand marke of the fynest gold that ever came out of Arabye. My lord the kyng, see hier this pyteous werke, these ben the fetheres of Sharpbecke, my wyf. My lord, yf ye wil haue worship, ye muste do herfore justyce, and avenge you, in such wise as men may fere and holde of yow: for yf ye suffre thus your sauf conduyt to be broken, ye your self shal not goo peasibly in the hye way: for tho lordes that do not justyce, and suffre that the lawe be not executed vpon the theeuis,

merderars, and them that mysdoo, they be parteners to fore God, of alle theyr mysdedes and trespaces, and eueryche thenne wylle be a lord hym self. Dere lorde, see wel to for to kepe your self.

HOW THE KYNGE WAS SORE ANGRY OF THISE COMPLAYNTES.

CAPITULO XXV.

Noble, the kyng was sore meuyd and angry whan he had herde thise complayntes of the cony, and of the roek. He was so ferdful to loke on, that his eyen glymmerd as fyre, he brayed as lowde as a bulle, in suche wise that alle the court quake for feere. At the laste he sayde, cryeng, By my crowne, and by the trouthe that I owe to my wyf, I shal so awreke and auenge this trespaces, that it shal be longe spoken of after that my sauf conduyt and my commandement is thus broken. I was ouer nyce that I beleiued so lyghtly the false shrewe. His false flateryng speche deceyved me. He tolde me he wolde go to Rome, and for thens ouer see to the Holy Londe. I gaf hym male and palster, and made of hym a pylgrym, and mente al trouth. O what false touches can he! How can he stuffe the sleue wyth flockes! But this caused my wyf; it was al by her counseyl; I am not the fyrst that haue ben deceyued by wymmen's counseyl, by whiche many a grete hurte hath byfallen. I pray and comande alle them that hold of me, and desire my frendship, be they here, or where someuer they be, that they wyth theyr

coonseyl and dedes, helpe me tauenge this ouer grete trespaas, that we and owris may abyde in honour and worship, and this false theef in shame, that he no more trespace ayenst our saufgarde. I wil my sell, in my persone, helpe therto al that I maye.

Ysegrym the wulf, and Bruyn the bere, herde wel the kynges wordes, and hoped wel to be auengid on Reynard the foxe, but they durste not speke one word. The kynge was so sore meuyde that none durste wel speke. Atte laste the quene spak, Sire, Pour Dieu, ne croyes mye toutes choses que on vous dye, et ne jures pas legierment. A man of worship shold not lyghtly bileue, ne swere gretly, vnto the tyme he knewe the mater clerly; and also, we ought by right here that other partye speke; ther ben many that complayne on other, and ben in the defaute them self. Audi alteram partem; here that other partye. I haue truly holden the foxe for good, and vpon that, that he mente no falshede, I helped hym that I myghte; but how someuer it cometh or gooth, is he euyl or good, me thynketh for your worship, that ye sholde not procede ayenst hym ouer hastely, that were not good ne honeste; for he may not escape fro you. Ye maye prysone hym, or slee hym, he muste obeye your jugement.

Thenne saide Fyrapel, the lupaerd, My lord, me thynketh my lady here hath saide to you trouthe, and gyuen yow good counseyl, do ye wel and folowe her, and take aduyse of your wyse counseyl, and yf he be founden gylty in the trespaces that now to yow be shewd, late hym be sore punysshid accordyng to his trespaces.

And yf he come not hyther, er this feste be ended, and excuse hym, as he ought of right to doo, thenne doo as the counseyl shall aduyse yow. But and yf he were twyes as moche false and ylle as he is, I wolde not counseylle that he sholde be done to more than right.

Isegrym, the wulf, saide, Sir Fyrapal, all we agree to the same as ferre as it pleseth my lord the kynge, it can not be beter. But though Reynart were now here, and he cleryd hym of double as many playntes, yet shold I brynge forth ayenst him that he had forfayted his lyf; but I wyl now be stylle and say not, by cause he is not presente, and yet above alle this, he hath tolde the kynge of certayn tresure lyeng in Krekenpyt, in Hulsterlo. Ther was never lyed a greter lesyng, ther wyth he hath vs alle begyled, and hath sore hyndred me and the bere, I dar leye my lyf theron that he sayd not therof a trewe worde. Now robbeth he, and steleth vpon the heth, all that gooth forth by his hows. Neuertheles, Sir Firapel, what that pleseth the kynge and yow, that muste wel be don. But and yf he wolde haue comen hyther, he myght haue ben here, for he had knowleche by the kynge's messager.

The kynge sayde, We wyl none otherwyse sende for hym, but I commande alle them that owe me seruyse, and wylle my honour and worshippe, that they make them redy to the warre at the ende of vj. dayes; all them that ben archers, and haue bowes, gonnes, bombardes, horsemen, and footemen, that alle thise be redy to besiege Maleperduys; I shal destroye Reynart the

foxe yf I be a kynge. Ye lordes, and sires, what saye ye hereto? wille ye doo this wyth a good wyl?

And they sayd and cryed alle, Ye, me lorde, whan that ye wylle, we shall alle goo with yow.

HOW GRYMBERT THE DASSE WARNED THE FOXE THAT THE KYNGE WAS WROTH WITH HYM AND WOLD SLEE HYM.

CAPITVLO XXVI.

Alle thise wordes herde Grymbert the dasse, whiche was his brother sone; he was sory and angry yf it myght haue proufyted. He ranne thenne the hye way to Maleperduys ward, he spared nether busshe ne hawe, but he hasted so sore, that he swette. He sorowed in hym self, for Reynart his rede eme; and as he went he saide to hymself, Alas! in what daunger be yé comen in. Where shal ye become? shal I see you brought fro lyf to deth, or elles exyled out of the lands? Truly I may be wel sorouful, for ye be the heed of alle our lygnage; ye be wyse of counseyl; ye be redy to helpe your frendes whan they haue nede; ye can so wel shewe your resons, that where ye speke ye wynne alle. With suche maner wayllyng and pytous wordes cam Grymbert to Maleperduys, and fonde Reynart his eme there standyng, whiche had goten two pygeons, as they cam first out of her neste to assaye yf they coude flee, and bicause the fethers on her wyngis were to shorte, they fylle doun to the ground, and as Reynart was gon out to seche his mete, he espyed them, and caught hem, and was comen home with hem.

And whan he sawe Grymbert comyng, he taryd and said, Welcome, my best beloued neuew, that I knowe in al my kynrede, ye haue ronne faste, ye ben al be swette; haue ye ony newe tydings? Alas, said he, Lyef eme it standeth euyl wyth yow. Ye haue loste both lyf and good. The kynge hath sworn that he shal gyue you a shameful deth; he hath commanded alle his folke withyn vj dayes for to be here; archers, fotemen, horsemen, and peple in waynes. And he hath gunnes, bombardes, tentes, and pauyllyons. And also he hath do laaden torches. See to fore yow, for ye haue nede. Ysegrym and Bruyn ben better now wyth the kynge than I am wyth yow. Alle that they wille, is doon; Isegrym hath don him to vnderstande that ye be a theef, and a morderar: he hath grete enuye to yow. Lapreel the cony, and Corbant the roek haue made a grete complaynt also. I sorow moche for your lyf, that for drede I am alle seke.

Puf, said the foxe, dere neuew is ther nothyng ellis, be ye so sore aferd herof. Make good chere hardely. Though the kynge hym self and alle that ben in the court had sworn my deth, yet shal I be exalted above them alle. They may alle faste jangle, clatre, and geue counseyl, but the courte may not prospere weythoute me, and my wyles and subtylte.

HOW REYNART THE FOXE CAM ANOTHER TYME TO THE COURTE.

CAPITULO XXVIJ.

Dere neuew late all these thynges passe, and come

here in, and see what I shall gyue you, a good payre of fatte pygeons. I loue no mete better; they ben good to dygeste. They may almost be swolowen in al hool, the bones ben half blode, I ete them wyth that other. I fele my self other whole encombred in my stomak, therefore ete I gladly lyght mete. My wyf Ermelyn shall receyue vs frendly. But telle her nothyng of this thynge; for she sholde take it ouer heuyly: she is tendre of herte: she myght for fere falle in somme sekenes. A lytyl thynge gooth sore to her herte; and to morow erly I wil goo with you to the courte, and yf I may come to speche, and may be herd, I shal so answere, that I shal touche somme nygh ynowh. Neuew, wyl not ye stande by me, as a frende ought to doo to another.

Yes truly dere eme, said Grymbert, and alle my good is at your commandement. God thanke you, neuew, said the foxe, that is wel said: yf I may lyue I shall quyte it yow. Eme, said Grymbert, ye may wel come to fore alle the lordes, and excuse yow; ther shal none areste yow, ne holde as longe as ye be in your wordes. The quene and the lupaerd have gotenn that.

Then said the foxe, therfor I am glad. Thenne I carre not for the beste of the man heer. I shal wel saue my self. They spake no more herof; but wente forth in to the burgh; and fonde Ermelyn there sittyng by her yonglyngs, whiche aroose up anon and receyuid them frendly. Grymbert salewed his ante and the chyldre wyth frendly wordes. Then ij pigeons were made ready for theyr soper, whiche Reynard had

taken : eche of them take his part as ferre as it wolde stratche. Yf eche of hem had had one more, ther sholde but lytyl haue ben lefte over. The foxe saide, Lief neuewe, how lyke ye my chyldren Rosel and Reynerdyn, they shal do worship to alle our lygnage. They begynne alredy to do wel. That one catcheth wel a chyken, and that other a pullet ; they conne wel also duke in the water after lapwynches and dokeys. I wolde ofte sende them for prouande, but I wil fyrst teche them how they shal kepe them fro the grynnes, fro the hunters, and fro the houndes. Yf they were so ferre comen that they were wyse, I durse wel truste to them, that they shold wel vytaylle vs in many good diuerses metes, that we now lacke. And they lyke and folowe me wel ; for they playe alle grymmyng, and where they hate, they loke frendly and meryly ; for therby, they brynge them under their feet, and byte the throte asondre. This is the nature of the foxe. They be swyfte in their takynge, whiche pleseth me wel. Eme, said Grymbert, ye may be glad that ye haue suche wyse chyldren. And I am glad of them also, bycause they be of my kynne. Grymbert, said the foxe, ye haue swethe and be wery, it were hye tyme that ye were at your reste. Eme, yf it plese you, it thynketh me good. Tho laye they down on a lytier made of strawe, the foxe, hys wyf and hys chyldren wente alle to slepe. But the foxe was al heuy, and laye, sighed, and sorowed, how he might beste excuse hymself.

On the morow erly, he ruymed his castel, and wente

with Grymbert. But he toke leue first of dame Ermelyn his wyf, and of his chyldren, and sayde: Thynke not longe, I must goo to the court wyth Grymbert my cosyn; yf I tarye somewhat be not aferde; and yf ye here ony ylle tydyngs, take it alway for the beste; and see wel to your self, and kepe our castel wel. I shal doo yonder the beste I can, after that I see how it gooth.

Alas, Reyner, said she, how haue ye now thus taken vpon yow for to go to the court agayn. The last tyme that ye were there, ye were in grete jeopardye of your lyf: and ye sayde, ye wold neuer come there more. Dame, said the foxe, Thauenture of the world is wonderly, it goth other whyle by wenyng. Many one weneth to have a thing whiche he must forgoo. I muste nedes now go thyder. Be content, it is al wythoute dreade; I hope to come at al ther lengest within fyue dayes agayn. Here wyth he departed, and wente with Grymbert to the court ward.

And when they were vpon the heeth, thenne sayde Reyner: Neuew, syth I was laste shryuen, I haue don many shrewde tornes. I wolde ye wold here me now, of alle that I have trespaced in. I made the bere to haue a grete wonde for the male whiche was cutte out of his skynne. And also, I made the wulf and his wyf to lese her shoon. I peased the kynge with grete lesyngis, and bare hym on honde that the wulf and the bere wold haue betrayed hym and wolde haue slayn him. So I made the kynge right wrath with them, where they deseruyd it not. Also, I tolde to

the kynge, that ther was grete tresour in Hulsterlo, of whiche he was neuer the better, ne richer, for I lyed al that I sayde. I ledde Bellyn the ramme, and Kywart the hare, with me, and slewe Kyward, and sente to the kynge, by Bellyn, Kywarts heed in skorn. And I dowed the cony bytwene his eers that almost I benaame his lyf from hym, for he escaped agenst my wyl: he was to me ouer swyft. The roeke may wel complayne, for I swolowed in dame Sharpbeck his wyf. And also, I haue forgoten on thyng, the laste tyme that I was shreuen to you, which I haue syth bethought me, and it was of grete deceyte that I dyde whiche I now wyll telle yow.

I cam wyth the wulf, walkynge bytwene Houthulst and Eluerdynage, there sawe we goo a rede mare; and she had a black colte or a fool of iiij monethis olde, which was good and fatte. Isegrym was almost storuen for hunger, and prayd me goo to the mare and wyte of her yf she wold selle her fool. I ran faste to the mare, and axed that of her. She sayd she wold selle it for money. I demanded of her how she wold selle it. She sayde it is wreton in my hyndre foot: yf ye conne rede, and be a clerk, ye may come see and rede it. Tho wyst I wel where she wold be, and I saide, Nay for sothe I can not rede; and also I desyre not to bye your chylde. Isegrym hath sente me hether; and wold fayn knowe the prys therof. The mare saide, Late hym come thenne hymself, and I shal late hym haue knowleche. I sayde, I shal, and hastely wente to Ysegrym and saide, Eme, wil ye ete

your bely ful of this colte? so goo faste to the mare, for she taryeth after yow. She hath do wryte the pris of her colte vnder her fote, she wolde that I shold haue redde it; but I can not one lettre, whiche me sore repenteth, for I wente neuer to scole. Eme, wylle ye bye that colte? conne ye rede, so maye ye bye it?

Oy neuew, that can I wel, what sholde me lette; I can wel Frenshe, Latyn, Englissh and Duche; I haue goon to scole at Oxenford. I haue also wyth olde and auncyent doctours, ben in the audyence, and herde plees, and also haue gyuen sentence. I am lycensyd in bothe lawes: what maner wrytyng that ony man can deuyse, I can rede it as perfyghtly as my name. I wyl goo to her, and shal anon vnderstonde the prys. And bad me to tarye for hym; and he ranne to the mare, and axed of her, how she wolde selle her fole, or kepe it.

She sayde the somme of the money standeth wreton after on my fote. He saide, late me rede it. She saide, Doo; and lyfte vp her foot whiche was newe shood wyth yron, and vj. stronge nayles, and she smote hym wythout myssyng on his heed, that he fyl doun as he had ben deed; a man shold wel haue ryden a myle er he aroos.

The mare trotted a way wyth her colte, and she leet Isegrym lyeng shrewdly hurte, and wounded. He laye and bledde as an hound. I wente tho to hym and sayde, Sir Ysegrym, dere eme, how is it now wyth yow? Haue ye eten ynowh of the colte? Is your bely

ful? Why gyue ye me no part? I dyde your erande. Haue ye slepte your dyner? I pray yow telle me what was wreton vnder the mares fote, what was it, prose, or ryme, metre or verse, I wold fayn know it. I trowe it was cantum, for I herde you synge me thought fro ferre, for ye were so wyse, that no man coude rede it better than ye.

Alas, Reynart! alas! said the wulf, I pray yow to leue your mockyng. I am so foule arayed, and sore hurte, that an herte of stone myght haue pyte of me. The mare wyth her longe legge had an yron foote, I wende the nayles therof had ben lettres, and she hytte me at the fyrst stroke vj. grete woundes in my heed, that almost it is clouen. Suche maner lettres shal I neuer more desire to rede.

Dere eme, is that trouthe that ye telle me? I haue herof grete meruaylle. I heelde you for one of the wysest clerkes that now lyue. Now I here wel, it is treue that I long syth haue redde and herde, that the beste clerkes ben not the wysest men. The laye peple otherwhyl wexe wyse. The cause that thise clerkes ben not the wysest, is that they studye so moche in the connyng and science, that they therin doole. Thus brought I Isegrym in this grete laste and harme, that he vnneth byhelde his lyf. Lyef neuew, now haue I tolde you alle my synnes that I remembre. What so euer falle at the court, I wote neuer how it shal stonde with me there. I am not now so sore aferd, for I am clere from synne, I wyl gladly come to mercy, and receyue penance by your counseyl.

Grymbert sayde, The trespaces ben grete, neuertheles who that is deed muste abide deed, and therfore I wyl forgyue it you altogydre, with the fere that ye shal suffre therfore, er ye shal conne excuse you of the deth; and hier vpon I wyl assoylle you. But the moste hyndre that ye shal haue shal be that ye sente Kywart's heed to the court, and that ye blynded the kynge wyth suttle lyes. Eme, that was right euyl doon.

The foxe sayde, What lyef neuew? Who that wyl goo thurgh the world this to here, and that to see, and that other to telle, truly it may not clerly be done. How shold ony man handle hony, but yf he lycked his fyngres. I am oftymes rored and prycked in my conscience as to loue God above all thynge, and myn euen Crysten as my self, as is to God wel acceptable, and accordyng to his lawe. But how wene ye that reson wythin forth fyghteth ayenst the outeward wylle, than stonde I alle stylle in my self, that me thynketh I haue loste alle my wittes, and wote not what me eyleth, I am thenne in suche a thought. I haue now alle lefte my synnes, and hate alle thynge that is not good, and clymme in hye contemplacion aboue his commandements; but this specyal grace haue I whan I am alone, but in a short whyle after, whan the warld cometh in me, thenne fynde I in my waye so many stones, and the fotespores that thyse loos prelates and riche preestys goo in, that I am anone taken agayn. Thenne cometh the world and wyl haue this; and the flesshe wyl lyue plesantly, whiche leye to fore me so many thinges that I thenne lose alle my good thoughtis and

purpoos. I here there synge pype, lawhe, playe, and alle mirth, and I here that these prelates, and riche curates, preche and saye al other wyse, then they thynke and doo. There learne I to lye. The lesynges ben moste vsed in the lordes courtes, certaynly lordes, ladyes, prestis, and clerkes, maken most lesynges. Men dar not telle to the lordes now the trouthe. Ther is defaute, I must flatre and lye also, or ellis I shold be shette wythout the dore. I haue ofte herde men saye trouthe and rightfully, and haue theyr reson made wyth a lesynge lyke to theyr purpose, and brought it in and wente thurgh by cause their mater shold seme the fayrer: the lesyng oftymes cometh vnauysed, and falleth in the mater vnwetyngly, and so whan she is wel cladde, it goth forth thurgh with that other.

Dere neuew, thus muste men now lye here, and there saye soth, flatre, and menace, praye, and curse, and seke euery man vpon his feblest and wekest. Who otherwyse wyll now haunte and vse the world, than deuyse a lesyng in the fayrest wise, and that bywymple with kerchieuis aboute in suche wise that men take it for a trouthe, he is not ronne away fro his maister. Can he that subtylte in suche wise that he stamer not in his wordes, and may thenne be herrde, neuew, this man may doo wonder; he may were skarlet and gryse; he wynneth in the spyrituel lawe, and temporal also, and wheresommeuer he hath to doo. Now ben ther many false shrewis that have grete enuye that they have so grete fordele; and wene that they canne also wel lye: and take on them to lye and to telle it

forth. He wolde fayn ete of the fatte morsellis, but he is not bileiud ne herd. And many ben ther that be so plompe and folisshe, that whan they wene beste to prononce and shewe their mater and conclude, they falle besyde and oute therof, and can not thenne helpe hem self, and leue theyr mater wythout tayl or heed, and he is acompted for a fool. And many mocke them ther with. But who can gyue to his lesynge a conclusion, and prononce it without tatelyng, lyke as it were wreton to fore hym, and that he can so blynde the peple, that his lesynge shal better be bileuid than the trouthe, that is the man.

What connyng is it to saye the trouth that is good to doo. How lawhe thise false subtyl shrewis that gyue counseyl to make thise lesynges, and sette them forth; and maken vnright goo aboue right; and make billes, and sette in thynges that neuer were thought ne sayd, and teche men see thurgh their fyngres, and alle for to wynne money; and late their tonges to hyre for to mayntene and strengthe their lesynges, alas, neuewe! this is an euyl connyng of whiche lyf, scathe, and hurte may come therof.

I saye not but that otherwhyle, men muste jape, bourde, and lye, in smale thyngis, for who so sayth alway trouthe, he may not now goo nowher thurgh the world. Ther ben many that playe Placebo. Who so alle way sayth trouth, shal fynde many letynges in his way. Men may wel lye whan it is nede, and after amende it by counseyl: for alle trespaces ther is mercy. Ther is no man so wyse but he dooleth other whyle.

Grymbert sayde, Wel, dere eme, what thynge shal you lette. Ye knowe al thyng at the narewest. Ye shulde brynge me hastely in dotyng, your resons passen my vnderstandyng. What nede haue ye to shryue you? ye shulde yourself by right be the preest, and lete me, and other sheep come to you for to be shryuen. Ye knowe the state of the world in suche wyse as no man may halte to fore you.

Wyth suche maner talkynge, the cam walkyng in to the court. The foxe sorowed somwhat in his herte. Neuertheles he bare it out and stryked forth thrugh alle the folke til he cam in to the place where the kynge hym self was. And Grymbert was alway by the foxe and sayde, Eme be not a ferde; and make good chere. Who that is hardy thauenture helpeth hym. Oftymes one day is better than somtyme an hole yere.

The foxe sayde, Neuewe, ye say trouthe. God thanke you, ye comforte me wel. And forth he wente and lokyd grymly here and there as who saith, What wylle ye? Here come I. He sawe there many of his kynne standyng, whiche yoned hym but lytyl good, as the otter, beuer, and other to the nombre of x. whome I shal name afterward. And somme were there that loued hym. The foxe cam in and fyl doun on his knees to fore the kyng and began his wordes and sayde.

HOW REYNART THE FOXE EXCUSED HYM TO FORE THE KYNGE.

CAPITULO XXVIIJ.

God, fro whom nothyng may be hyd, and aboue alle

thyng is myghty, saue my lorde the kynge, and my lady the quene, and gyue hym grace to knowe who hath right, and who hath wronge. For ther lyue many in the world, that seme otherwise outward than they be withinne, I wolde that God shewde openly euery mans mysdedes, aud alle theyr trespaces stoden wreton in theyr forehedes ; and it coste me more than I now saye. And that ye, my lord the kynge, knewe as moche as I doo, how I dispose me bothe erly and late in your seruyse. And therfore am I complayned on of the euyl shrewys, and wyth lesynges am put out of your grace, and consayte, and wold charge me with grete offencis, wythout deseruyng, ayenst al right. Wherfore I crye out, Harowe on them, that so falsely haue belyed me ; and brought me in suche trouble. How be it, I hope and knowe you bothe, my lord and my lady, for so wyse and discrete, that ye be not ledde nor bileue suche lesyngis, ne false talis, out of the right waye ; for ye haue not be woned so to doo. Therfore, dere lorde, I biseche you to considere by your wysedom alle thynge by right, and lawe ; is it in deede, or in speche, do euery man right. I desire no better. He that is gylty, and founde fawty, late hym be punsshyd ; men shal wel knowe er I departe out of this courte, who that I am. I can not flatre, I wil allewey shewe openly my heed.

HOW THE KYNGE ANSWERD VPON REYNARTS EXCUSE.

Alle they, that were in the palays, weren alle stylle, and wondred that the foxe spack so stoutly. The

kynge sayde, Ha, Reynart, how wel can ye your falacye and salutacion doon; but your fayr wordes may not helpe you. I thynke wel that he shal this daye for your werkis be hanged by your necke. I wil not moche chyde wyth you. But I shal shorte your payne. That ye loue vs wel, that haue ye wel shewde on the cony, and on Corbant the roeck. Your falsenes, and your false inuencions, shal without longe taryeng make you to deye. A pot may goo so longe to water, that at the laste it cometh tobroken hoom. I thynke your potte, that so ofte hath deceyued vs, shal now hastly be broken.

Reynart was in grete fere of thise wordes. He wold wel he had ben at Coleyn, whan he come thedyr. Thenne, thoughte he, I muste her thurgh, how that I doo. My lorde, the kynge, seyd he, it were wel reson that ye herde my wordes alle out. Thaugh I were dampned to the deth, yet ought ye to here my wordes out. I haue yet here to fore tyme gyuen to you many a good counseyl and prouffytable. And in nede alwey haue byden by you where other beestis haue wyked and goon theyr way. Yf now the euyl beestis with false maters, haue to fore you wyth wronge belyed me and I myght not come to myn excuse, ought I not thenne to playne. I haue to fore this seen that I shold be herde by fore another; yet myght thise thyngis wel chaunge and come in theyr olde state. Olde good dedes ought to be remembrid. I see here many of my lygnage and frendes standyng, that seme they sette now lytyl by me, whiche neuertheles shold sore deere

in theyr hertes, that ye, my lorde the kynge, sholde destroye me wrongfully. Yf ye so dyde ye sholde destroye the trewest seruant that ye haue in alle your landes.

What wene ye, syr kynge ; hadde I knowen my self gylty in ony feat or broke, that wold haue comen hether to the lawe emonge alle myne enemyes. Nay, sire, nay. Not for alle the world of rede gold. For I was fre and at large. What nede had I to do that, but God be thanked! I knowe my self clere of alle mys dedes, that I dar wel come openly in the lyghte and to answere to alle the complayntes that ony man can saye on me.

But whan Grymbert brought me first thise tydyngis tho was I not wel plesed, but half fro myself that I lepe here and there, as an vnwyse man. And had I not ben in the censures of the chyrche, I had wythout taryeng haue comen. But I wente dolynge on the heeth, and wist not what to doo for sorowe. And thenne it happed that Mertyne, myn eme, the ape, met wyth me, whiche is wyser in clergie than somme preest ; he hath ben aduocate for the bysshop of Eameryk ix yere duryng. He sawe me in this grete sorow and heuynes ; and saide to me, Dere cosyn, me thynketh ye ar not wel wyth yourself ; what eyleth yow ? who hath dysplesyth yow ? thynge that thoucheth charge ought to be gyuen in knowleche to frendis. A triew frende is a grete helpe. He fyndeth ofte better counseyl than he that the charge resteth on. For who someuer is charged wyth maters, is so heuy and

acombred with them, that ofte he can not begynne to fynde the remedye. For suche be so woo lyke as they had loste theyr inwytte.

I saide, Dere eme, ye saye trouthe. For in lyke wyse is fallen to me. I am brought in to a grete heuynes, vndeseruid and not gylty, by one to whom I haue alway ben an herty and grete frende: that is the cony, whiche cam to me yesterday in the morenyng where as I satte to fore my hows, and sayd matyns. He tolde me he wolde goo to the court, and salewed me frendly, and I hym agayn. Tho sayd he to me, Good Reynard, I am an hongred and am wery: haue ye ony mete? I saide, Ye, ynowh, come nere. Tho gaf I hym a copel of maynchettis with swete butter. It was vpon a Wednesday, on whiche day I am not wonte to ete ony flessh. And also I fasted by cause of this feste of Whytsontyd whiche approuched. For who that wylle taste of the ouerest wysehede, and lyue goostly, in kepyng the commandemts of our Lord, he muste faste, and make hym redy ayenst the hye festis. Et vos estote parati. Dere Eme, I gaf hym fayr whyte breed with swete butter, wher wyth a man myght wel be easid that were moche hongry. And whan he had eten his bely fulle, tho cam Russel, my yongest sone, and wold haue taken away that was lefte. For yonge chyldren wold alway fayne eten. And with that he tasted for to haue taken somwhat, the cony smote Russel, to fore his mouthe, that his teeth bledde, and fyl down half a swoun. Whan Reynardyn, myn eldest sone, sawe that, he sprange to the cony, and

caught hym by the heed, and shold haue slayn hym, had I not reskowed hym. I helpe hym that he wente from hym : and bete my clwylde sore therfore. Lapreel the cony ran to my lord the kyng, and saide I wold haue murdred hym. See, eme, thus come I in the wordes ; and I am leyde in the blame. And yet he complayneth, and I playne not.

After this cam Corbant the roek, fleyng wyth a sorouful noyse. I asked what hym eyled. And he said, Alas my wyf is deed : yonder lyeth a dede hare full of mathes, and wormes, and there she ete so moche therof, that the wormes haue byten a two her throte. I axed hym how cometh that by ; he wolde not speke a worde more, but flewe his waye ; and lete me stande. Now, saith he, that I haue byten and slayn her. How shold I come so nygh her ; for she fleeth, and I goo a fote. Beholde, dere eme, thus am I born an honde. I may saye wel that I am vnhappy. But parauenture it is for myn olde synnes. Hit were good for me, yf I coude paciently suffre it.

The ape saide to me, Neuew, ye shal goo to the courte to fore the lordes and excuse yow. Alas, eme, that may not be ; for the archdeken hath put me in the popes curse, bycause I counseylled Ysegrym the wulf, for to leue his relygon at Elmare, and forsake his habyte. He complayned to me, that he lyuyd so straytly, as in longe fastyng, and many thyngis redyng and syngyng, that he coude not endure it. Yf he shold longe abyde there he shold deye. I had pyte of his complaynyng, and I helpe hym, as a trewe frende,

that he cam oute. Whiche now me sore repenteth. For he laboureth, al that he can, agenst me to the kynge, for to do me to be hanged. Thus doth he euyl for good. So, eme, thus am I at the ende of my wyttes and of counseyl. For I muste goo to Rome for an absolucion, and thenne shal my wyf and chyldren suffre moche harme and blame. For thise euyl bestis that hate me, shalle do to hem alle the hurte they maye, and fordryue them wher they can; and I wold wel defende hem, yf I were fre of the curse; for thenne wold I goo to the court and excuse me, where now I dar not. I shold do grete synne yf I cam emonge the good peple, I am aferde God shold plaghe me.

Nay, cosyn, be not aferd. Er I shold suffre you in this sorow, I know the way to Rome wel. I vnderstande me on this werke. I am called ther Mertyne, the bisshops clerke; and am wel by knowen there. I shal do syte the archdeken and take a plee ayenst hym, and shal brynge with me for you an absolucion, ayenst his wil, for I knowe there all that is for to be doon or lefte. There dwelleth Symon, myn eme, whiche is grete and myghty ther; who that may gyue ought, he helpeth hym anon. Ther is Prentout, Waytescathe, and other of my frendis and alyes. Also, I shal take soome money with me, yf I ned ony. The preyer is wyth yeftes hardy, wyth money alle way the right goth forth. A trewe frende shal for his frende auenture both lyf and good; and so shal I for you in your right. Cosyn, make good chere, I shal not reste after

to morow, til I come to Rome, and I shal solycyte your maters. And goo ye to the court, as sone as ye may; all your mysdedes, and tho synnes that haue brought you in the grete sentence and curse, I make you quyte of them; and take them in my self. Whan ye come to the court, ye shal fynde there, Rukenawe, my wyf, her two susters, and my thre chyldren, and many mo of our lignage. Dere cosyn, speke to them hardely. My wyf is sondrely wyse, and wil gladly do somme what for her frendis. Who that hath nede of helpe, shal fynde on her grete frendship. One shal alway seke on his frendes, thaugh he haue angred them: For blood muste krepe where it can not goo; and yf so be, that ye be so ouer chargyd, that ye may haue no right, thenne sende to me, by nyght and day, to the court of Rome, and late me haue knowleche therof, and alle tho that ben in the lande, is it kynge or quene, wyf or man, I shal brynge them alle in the Popes curse; and sende there an inderdicte, that no man shal rede ne syngen, ne crystene chyldren, ne burye the dede, ne receyue sacramente, tyl that ye shal haue good ryght.

Cosyn, this shal I wel gete, for the pope is so sore olde, that he is but lytil sette by: and the cardynal of Puregold hath alle the myght of the court: he is yonge and grete of frendis; he hath a concubyne, whom he mouch loueth; and what she desyreth that geteth she anone. See cosyn, she is myn nece, and I am grete and may doo mouche with her: in suche wyse what I desyre, I faylle not of it; but am alway fur-

therd therin. Wherefore, cosyn, byd my lord the kynge, that he doo you right. I wote wel he wil not warne you, for the right is hevy ynough to every man.

My lord the kynge, whan I herde this I lawhed: and wyth grete gladnes cam hether, and haue told you alle trouthe. Yf ther be ony in this court, that can leye on me, ony other mater, wyth good witnesse, and preue it, as ought to be, to a noble man, late me thenne make amendes, acordyng to the lawe: and yf he wil not leue of herbi, thenne sette me day and feld, and I shal make good on hym, also ferre as he be of as good birth as I am, and to me lyke; and who that can wyth fyghtyng gete the worship of the felde, late hym haue it. This right hath standen yet hetherto; and I wil not it shold be broken by me. The lawe and right doth no man wrong.

Alle the beestis, both poure and riche, were alle stylle whan the foxe spak so stoutly. The cony Laprel, and the roek, were so sore aferde, that they durste not speke; but pyked and stryked them out of the court bothe two, and whan they were a room, fer in the playne, they saide, God graunte that this felle murderare may fare evyl. He can bywrappe and covere his falshede, that his wordes seme as trewe as the gospel; herof knoweth no man than we: How shold we brynge wytnesse? it is better that we wyke and departe, than we sholde holde a felde, and fyghte with hym; he is so shrewde, ye thaugh ther of us were fyve, we coud not defende us, but that he shold sle vs alle.

Isegrym the wulf, and Bruyn the bere, were woo in hemself, whan they sawe thise tweyne rume the court. The kynge sayde, Yf ony man wil complayne, late hym come forth, and we shal here hym. Yesterday camen here so many, where ben they now ? Reynart is here.

The foxe saide, My lord, ther ben many that complayne, that and yf they sawe their aduersarye, they wold be stylle, and make no playnte. Witnes now of Laprel the cony, and Corbant the roek, which haue complayned on me to yow, in my absence : but now that I am comen in your presence, they flee away, and dar not abyde by theyr wordes. Yf men shold byleue false shrewes, it shold do moche harme and hurte to the good men. As for me, it skylleth not. Nevertheles, my lord, yf they had by your commandement, axed of me forgyfnes, how be it they haue gretly trespaced, yet I had for your sake pardoned and forgyue them. For I wil not be out of charyte, ne hate ne complayne on myne enemyes. But I sette alle thyng in Goddes hand ; he shal werke and auenge it as it plesyth hym. The kynge sayde, Reynart, me thynketh ye be greued, as ye saye : Ar ye withinforth, as ye seme outward. Nay, it is not so cleer, ne so open nowher nyghe, as ye here haue shewed. I muste saye what my gryef is, which towcheth your worship and lyf, that is to wete, that ye haue don a foul and shameful trespaas. Whan I had pardoned you alle your offencis, and trespacis, and ye promysed to goo ouer the see on pylgremage, and gaf to you, male and staf, and after this, ye sente me by

Bellyn the rame the male agayne, and theryn Kywarts heed. How might ye do a more reprouable trespass? Now were ye so hardy to dore to me doo suche a shame. Is it not euyl don to send to a lorde, his seruaunts heed? Ye can not saye nay, here agaynst; for Bellyn the rame whiche was our chapelayn, tolde vs al the mater, how it happed. Suche reward as he had whan he brought vs the message, the same shal ye haue or right shal faylle.

Tho was Reynart so sore aferd, that he wist not what to saye. He was at his wittes ende; and lokyd aboute him pytously; and sawe many of his kyn and alyes that herde alle this, but nought they saide. He was al pale in his visage, but noman proferd hym hand ne foot to helpe hym. The kinge said, Thou subtyl felaw and fals shrewe, why spekest thou not, now dombe. The foxe stode in grete drede, and syghed sore, that alle herde him. But the wulf and the bere were glad herof.

HOW DAME RUKENAWE ANSWERD FOR THE FOXE TO THE KYNGE. CAPITULO XXIX.

Dame Rukenawe, the she ape, Reynart's aunte, was not wel plesyd. She was grete wyth the quene, and wel belouyd. Hit happed wel for the foxe that she was there, for she vnderstood alle wysedom; and she durste wel speke, where as it to doo was. Where euer she cam euerich was glad of her. She sayde, My lord

the kyng, ye ought not to be angry whan ye sytte in jugement; for that becometh not your noblesse. A man that sytteth in jugement ought to put fro hym alle wrath and angre. A lorde ought to have dyscrecion that shold sytte in justyse. I knowe better the poyntes of the lawe than somme that were furred gownes, for I haue lerned many of them, and was made connyng in the lawe. I had in the pope's palays of Woerden, a good bedde of heye, where other beestes laye on the harde grounde; and also whan I had there to doo, I was suffred to speke, and was herde to fore another, by cause I knowe so wel the lawe. Seneca wryteth that a lorde shal oueral doo right and lawe, he shal charge none to whom he hath gyuen his saufgarde to, aboue the right and lawe; the lawe ought not to halte for no man; and euery man that stondeth here wolde wel bethynke hym what he hath doon and bydryuen in his dayes; he shold the better haue pacience and pyte on Reynart. Late euery man knowe hym self, that is my counseyl. Ther is none that stondeth so surely, but otherwhyle he falleth or slydeth. Who that neuer mysdede ne synned, is holy and good, and hath no neede to amende hym. Whan a man doth amys, and thenne by counseyl amendeth it, that is humaynly and so ought he to doo, but alway to mysdo and trespace, and not to amende hym, that is euyl, and a deuely lyf.

Merke thenne what is wreton in the gospel, *Estote misericordes*, be ye mercyful; yet standeth ther more, *Nolite iudicare, et non iudicabimini*, deme ye no man,

and ye shal not be demed. Ther standeth also how the pharisees brought a woman taken in aduoultrye, and wold haue stoned her to deth: they axed our Lord what he said therto. He said, Who of yow alle is withoute synne, late hym caste the fyrst stone. Tho abode no man, but lefte her there stondyng.

Me thynketh it is so hyere. Ther be many that see a strawe in an others ye, that can not see a balke in his owne. Ther be many that deme other, and hym self is werst of alle. Thaugh one falle ofte, and at laste aryseth vp and cometh to mercye, he is not therof dampned. God receyueth alle them that desyre his mercy; Late no man condampne another; though they wyste that he had don amys, yet late them see theyr own defautes, and thenne may they them self correcte fyrste; and thenne Reynart my cosyn shold not fare the werse: for his fadre and his graunfadre, haue alway ben in more loue and reputacion in this court, than Isegrym the wulf or Bruyn the bere, with al theyr frendis and lignage. Hit hath ben here to fore an vnlyke comparison. The wysedom of Reynart my cosyn, and the honour and worship of hym, that he hath doon, and the counseyl of them; for they know not how the world gooth. Me thynketh this court is al torned vp so doon. Thise false shrewes, flaterers, and deceyuours arise and wexe grete by the lordes and ben enhaunsed vp; and the good, triewe, and wyse been put doun. For they haue ben woned to counseylle truly, and for thonour of the kyng: I can not see how this may stonde longe.

Thenne said the kynge, Dame, yf he had don to yow suche trespaas as he hath don to other it shold repente yow. Is it wonder that I hate hym. He breketh alway my saufgarde. Haue ye not herde the complayntes that here haue ben shewde of hym, of murdre, of theefte, and of treson? Haue ye suche trust in hym? Thynke ye that he is thus good and cleer, thenne sette hym vp on the awter and worshipe and praye to hym as to a saynte. But ther is none in alle the world that can saye ony good of hym. Ye maye saye moche for hym, but in thende ye shal fynde hym al nought. He hath nether kyn, ne wyn, ne frende that wylle entreprise to helpe hym, he hath so deseruyd. I haue grete meruaylle of you; I herde neuer of none that hath felawshipped with hym that euer thanked hym, or saide any good of hym, sauf you now; but alway he hath stryked hem with his tayl. The she ape ansuerd and said, My lord, I loue hym, and haue hym in grete chierte; and also I knowe a good dede that he ones in your presence dyde, wherof ye coude hym grete thanke: though now it be thus torned, yet shal the heuyest weye moste. A man shal love his frende by mesure, and not his enemye hate ouermoche. Stedfastnes and constaunce is fyttyng, and behoueth to the lordes, how somcuer the world torneth. Men ought not preyse to moche the daye, tyl euen be come. Good counseyl is good for hym that wil doo ther after.

A PARABLE OF A MAN THAT DELYVERD A SERPENT FROM PERYL OF DETH.

CAPITULO XXX.

Now two yere passid cam a man and a serpent in to this court, for to haue jugement, whiche was to yow and youres right doubteful. The serpent stode in an hedche where as he supposed to haue gon thorugh, but he was caught in a snare by the necke, that he myght not escape without helpe, but shuld haue lost his lyf there. The man cam forth by, and the serpente called to hym, and cryde, and prayde the man, that he wolde helpe hym out of the snare, or ellis he muste there dye.

The man had pyte of hym, and saide, Yf thou promyse to me that thou wilt not enuenyme me, ne do me none harme ne hurte, I shal helpe the out of this peryl. The serpente was redy, and swore a grete othe that he, now ne neuer, sholde doo hym harme ne hurte. Thenne he vnlosed hym, and delyuerd hym out of the snare, and wente forth to gydre a good whyle, that the serpente had grete hongre, for he had not eten a grete while to fore, and sterte to the man, and wold haue slayn hym. The man sterte away, and was a ferde, and saide, Wilte thou now sle me? hast thou forgoten the oth that thou madest to me, that thou sholdest not mysdoo ne hurte me? The serpent answerd, I maye doo it good to fore al the world that I doo; the nede of hongre may cause a man to breke his oth. The man saide, yf it may be not bettre, gyue me so longe respyte tyl we mete and fynde that may juge the mater by right. The serpent graunted therto.

Thus they wente to gydre so longe, that they fonde Tyselyn, the rauen, and Slyndpere, his sone. There rehersed they theyr resons. Tiselyn the rauen juged anon that he shold ete the man, he wolde fayn haue eten his parte, and his sone also. The serpent said to the man, How is it now? What thynke ye, haue I not wonne? The man saide, How sholde a robber juge this? he shold haue auayle therby, and also he is allone; ther muste be two or thre at leste to gydre, and that they understande the right and lawe; and that don, late the sentence gon. I am neuertheles yl on ynough.

They agreed and wente forth bothe to gydre so longe that they fonde the beer and the wulf, to whom they tolde theyr mater. And they anon juged that the serpent shold sle the man, for the nede of hongre brek-eth oth alwaye. The man thenne was in grete doubte and fere, and the serpent cam and caste his venym at hym. But the man lepe a way from hym with grete payne, and said, Ye doo grete wronge that ye thus lye in a wayte to slee me; ye haue no right therto. The serpent sayde, Is it not ynough yet? hit hath ben twyes juged. Ye, sayd the man, that is of them that ben wonte to murdre and robbe. Alle that euer they swere and promyse they hold not. But I appele this mater in to the court to fore our lord the kyng; and that thou mayst not foraske; and what jugement shal be gyuen there, I shal obeye and suffre, and neuer doo the contrarye.

The bere and the wulf sayden that it shold be so, and that the serpent desired no better. They supposed

yf it shold come to fore you, it shold goo there as they wolde. I trowe ye be wel remembrid herof.

Tho cam they alle to the court to fore yow, and the wulues two chyldren cam with theyr fader, whiche were callyd Empty bely, and Neuer full, by cause they wold ete of the man, for they howlyd for grete hongre, wherfore ye commaunded them to auoyde your court. The man stode in grete drede, and called vpon your good grace, and tolde how the serpente wold haue taken his lyf from hym, to whom he had sauyd his lyf, and that aboue his oth and promyse, he wold haue deuoured hym. The serpente answerd, I haue not trespaced, and that I report me hoolly on the kyng. For I dyde it to saue my lyf; for nede of lyf, one may breke his oth and promyse.

My lord, that tyme were ye and alle your counseyl herewyth acombryd. For your noble grace sawe the grete sorow of the man, and ye wold not that the man shold for his gentilnes and kyndenes be juged to deth. And on that other, sith hongre and nede to saue the lyf, seketh narowly to be holpen. Ther was none in al the court that coude ne knewe the right hierof. Ther were somme that wolde fayn the man had be holpen. I see them hier stondyng. I wote wel they sayde that they coude not ende this mater.

Thenne commanded ye that Reynard, my neuew, shold come and saye his aduyse in this mater. That tyme was he aboue alle other beleuyd, and herd in the court, and ye bad hym gyue sentence acordyng to the best right, and we alle shal folowe hym; for he knewe the

grounde of the lawe. Reynard said, My lord, it is not possyble to yeue a trewe sentence after theyr wordes, for in here sayeng ben ofte lesynges. But and yf I myght see the serpent in the same paryl and nede that he was in, whan the man loosed hym, and unbonde, thenne wyste I wel what I shold saye, and who that wolde doo otherwise he shold mysdoo agayn right.

Thenne sayd ye, my lord, Reynard, that is wel said, we alle acorde herto, for no man can saye better. Thenne wente the man and the serpent in to the place wher as he fonde the serpent. Reynart bad that the serpent shold be sette in the snare in lyke wyse as he was, and it was don. Thenne sayd ye, my lord, Reynart, how thynketh yow now? what jugement shal we gyue? Thenne said Reynard the foxe, My lord, now ben they bothe lyke as they were to fore, they haue neyther wonne ne loste. See, my lord, how I juge for a right, also ferre as it shal plese your noble grace. Yf the man wil now lose and vnbynde the serpent vpon the promyse and oth that he to fore made to hym, he may wel doo it; but yf he thynke that he for ony thyng shold be emcombryd or hyndred by the serpent, or for nedeof hongre wold breke his oth and promyse, thenne juge I that the man may goo frely where he wyl, and late the serpente abyde stylle bounden, lyke as he myght haue don at the begynnyng; for he wold haue broken his oth and promyse wher as he helpe hym out of suche fereful peryl. Thus thynketh me a ryghtful jugement that the man shal haue his fre choys, lyke as he tofore hadde.

Lo, my lord, this jugement thought yow good, and

alle your counseyl, whiche at that tyme were by you, and folewed the same, and preysed Reynardis wysedom, that he had made the man quyte and free. Thus the foxe wysely kepte your noble honour and worship, as a triewe seruant is bounde to doo to his lord. Wher hath the beer or the wulf don euer to yow so moche worship? They conne wel huylen, and blasen, stele and robbe, and ete fatte morsellis, and fyll theyr belyes, and thenne juge they for right and lawe, that smale theuis that stelen hennys and chekyns shold be hanged. But they hem self that stelen kyen, oxen, and horses, they shal goo quyte, and be lordes, and seme as though they were wyser than Salamon, Avycene, or Aristotiles. And eche wil be holden hye proud, and preised of grete dedes and hardy; but and they come where as it is to doo, they ben the firste that flee. Thenne muste the symple goo forth to fore, and they kepe the rereward behynde. Och, my lorde, these and other lyke to them, be not wyse, but they destroye towne, castle, lande, and peple. They retche not whos hows brenneth, so that they may warme them by the coles.

They seke alle theyr owne auayll, and synguler proffyte; but Reynart the foxe, and alle his frendis, and lygnage, sorowen and thynke to preferre the honour, worship, fordeel, and proffyte, of theyr lord, and for wise counseyl, whiche ofte more prouffyteth here than pryde and boost. This doth Reynard, though he haue no thanke. Atte longe it shal be wel knowen who is beste, and doth moste prouffyt. My lord, ye saye, that his kynne and lignage drawe al afterward

from hym, and stonde not by hym, for his falshede and deceyuable and subtyl touchis. I wolde an other had sayde that, ther sholde thenne suche wrake be taken therof, that hym myght growle that euer he sawe hym. But, my lorde, we wyl forbere you. Ye maye saye your playsir, and also I saye it not by yow. Were ther ony that wolde bedryue ony thyng ayenst yow with wordes or with werkes, hym wold we soo doò to, that men shold saye we had ben there. Ther as fyghtyng is, we ben not woned to be aferd.

My lorde, by your leue I may wel gyue you knowleche of Reynardis frendis and kynne. Ther ben many of them that for his sake and loue wille auenture lyf and good. I know my self for one. I am a wyf. I shold, yf he had nede, sette my lyf and good for hym. Also I haue thre ful waxen children which ben hardy and stronge, whom I wold alle to gydre auenture for his loue, rather than I shold see hym destroyed; yet had I leuer dye than I sawe them myscarye to fore myn eyen: so wel loue I hym.

WHICHE BEN FRENDES AND KYNNE UNTO REYNARD THE FOXE.

CAPITULO XXXJ.

The fyrste chylde is named Byteluys, whiche is moche cherysshyd and can make moche sporte and game, wherfore is gyuen to hym the fatte trenchours and moche other good mete, whiche cometh wel to prouffyt of Fulrompe his brother, and also my thyrde

chylde is a doughter and is named Hatenette. She can wel pyke out lyse and netis out of mens heedis. Thise thre ben to eche other tryewe, wherfor I loue them wel.

Dame Rukenawe called hem forth and sayde, Welcome, my dere chyldren; come forth and stande by Reynard your dere neuew. Thenne sayd she, Come forth, alle ye that ben of my kynne and Reynarts; and late vs praye the kynge that he wille doo to Reynard ryght of the lande. Tho cam forth many a beest anon, as the squyrel, the musehont, the fychews, the martron, the beuer wyth his wyf Ordegale, the genete, the ostrole, the boussyng and the fyret; thyse tweyne ete as fayne polayl as doth Reynart; the oter and Pantecroet his wyf, whom I had almoste forgoten, yet were they to fore with the beuer, enemyes to the foxe; but they durst not gaynsaye Dame Rukenawe, for they were aferd of her. She was also the wysest of al his kynne of counseyl, and was moste doubted. Ther cam also mo than xx other by cause of her for to stande by Rynard. Ther cam also dame Atrote with her ij sustres, the wesel, and Hermell the asse, the backe, the watreratte, and many moo to the nombre of xl. whiche alle camen and stoden by Reynard the foxe.

My lord the kyng, saide Rukenawe, come and see, heir yf Reynart haue any frendis. Here may ye see we ben your trewe subgettis whiche for yow wold auenture both lyf and good, yf ye had nede. Though ye be hardy, myghty and stronge, oure wel wyllyd frendship can not hurte you. Late Reynard the foxe

wel bethynke hym vpon thise maters that ye haue leyd ayenst him, and yf he can not excuse hym, thenne doo hym right, we desire no better. And this by right ought to no man be warned.

The quene thenne spack: This saide I to hym yesterday; but he was so fyers and angry that he wold not here it. The lupaerd saide also, Syre, ye may juge no ferther than your men gyue theyr verdyte: for yf ye wold goo forth by wyl and myghte, that were not worshipful for your estate; here álleways bothe partyes, and thenne by the beste and wysest counseyl, gyue jugement discretly acordyng to the beste right.

The kinge saide, this is al trewe; but I was so sore meuyd whan I was enformed of Kywart's deth, and sawe his hede, that I was hoot and hasty. I shal here the foxe. Can he answere and excuse hym of that is leyd ayenst hym, I shal gladly late hym goo quyte. And also atte requeste of his good frendis and kynne. Reynart was glad of thise wordes, and thoughte, God thanke myn aunte! She hath the rys doo blosme agayn. She hath wel holpen me forth now. I haue now a good foot to daunse on. I shal now loke out of myne eyen, and brynge forth the fayrest lesyngis that euer man herde, and brynge my self out of this daunger.

HOW THE FOXE WYTH SUBTYLTE EXCUSED HYM FOR THE DETH OF KYWART THE HARE, AND OF ALLE OTHER MATERS THAT WERE LEYDE AYENST HYM, AND HOW WYTH FLATERYNG GATE AGAYN HIS PEES OF THE KYNGE.

CAPITULO XXXIJ.

Thenne spak Reynart the foxe, and saide, Alas what

saye ye, is Kywart deed? and where is Bellyn the ramme, what brought he to yow whan he cam agayn; for I delyuerd to hym thre iewellis. I wold fayn knowe where they ben be comen. That one of hem shold he haue gyuen to yow, my lord the kyng: and the other ij to my lady the quene.

The kynge saide, Bellyn brought us nought ellis but Kywarts heed: lyke as I saide you to fore; wherof I toke on hym wrake; I made hym to lose his lyf. For the foule kaytyf said to me, that he hym self was of the counseyl of the lettres makyng that were in the male.

Alas, my lord, is this very trouthe? Wo to me kaytyf, that euer I was born, sith that thise good jewellis be thus lost, myn herte wil breke for sorowe. I am sory that I now lyue. What shal my wyf saye whan she hereth herof. She shal goo out of her wytte for sorow. I shal neuer, also longe as I lyue, haue her frendship; she shal make moche sorowe when she hereth therof. The she ape saide, Reynard, dere neuew, what prouffyteth that ye make al this sorowe. Late it passe, and telle us, what thise jewellis were. Parauenture we shalle fynde counseyl to haue them agayn yf they be aboue erthe. Mayster Akeryn shal laboure for them in his bookis; and also we shal curse for them in alle chirchys vnto the tyme that we haue knowleche wher they ben. They maye not be loste.

Nay, aunte, thynke not that; for they that haue them, wyl not lyghtly departe fro them. Ther was neuer kynge that euer gaf so riche jewellis as these

be. Neuertheles ye haue somwhat wyth your wordes easyd myn herte, and made it lighter than it was. Alas loo, here ye may see how he or they to whome a man trusteth moost, is ofte by hym or them deceyvyd. Thaugh I shold goo al the world thorugh, and my lyf in auenture sette therfore, I shal wyte wher thise jewellis ben be comen.

Wyth a dissymylyd and sorouful speche saide the foxe, Herken ye, alle my kynne and frendys, I shal name to yow, thise jewellis, what they were. And thenne may ye saye that I haue a grete losse. That one of them was a rynge of fyn golde, and within the rynge next the fyngre were wreton lettres enameld with sable and asure, and ther were thre hebrews names therin. I coude not my self rede ne spelle them, for I vnderstonde not that langage; but Maister Abrion of Tryer, he is a wyse man, he vnderstandeth wel al maner of langages,and the vertue of al maner herbes; and ther is no beest so fiers ne stronge, but he can dompte hym, for yf he see hym ones he shal doo as hee wyl. And yet he beleueth not on God. He is a jewe. The wysest in connyng, and specially he knoweth the vertue of stones. I shewde hym ones this rynge. He saide that they were tho thre names that Seth brought out of Paradys whan he brought to his fadre Adam the oyle of mercy. And whom someuer bereth on hym thise thre names he shal neuer be hurte by thondre ne lyghtnyng; ne no witchcraft shal haue power ouer hym, ne be tempted to doo synne. And also

he shal neuer take harm by colde, thaugh he laye thre wynters longe nyghtis in the feelde, thaugh it snowed, stormed or frore, neuer so sore. So grete myght haue thise wordes; wytnes of Maister Abrion.

Withought forth on the rynge stode a stone of thre maner colours; the one part was lyke rede cristalle, and shoon lyke as fyre had ben therin, in suche wyse that yf one wold goo by nyght, hym behoued non other lighte, for the shynyng of the stone made and gaf as grete a light as it had ben mydday. That other parte of the stone was whyte and clere, as it had ben burnysshid. Who so had in his eyen ony smarte or sorenes, or in his body ony swellynge or heed ache, or ony sykenes without forth, yf he stryked this stone on the place wher the gryef is, he shal anon be hole; or yf ony man be seke in his body of venym, or ylle mete in his stomach, of colyk, stranguyllon, stone, fystel, or kanker, or ony other sekenes, sauf only the uery deth, late hym leye this stone in a litle watre, and late hym drynke it, and he shal forthwyth be hole, and quyte of his sekenes.

Alas! saide the foxe, we haue good cause to be sory to lese suche a jewel. Forthemore the thirde colour was grene, lyke glas, but ther were somme sprynklis therin lyke purpure. The maister told for trouthe, that who that bare this stone vpon hym shold neuer be hurte of his enemye, and that noman, were he neuer so stronge and hardy, that myght mysdoo hym; and where euer that he fought he shold haue vyctorye, were it by nyght or daye, also ferre as he behelde it fastyng;

and also therto where someuer he wente, and in what felawship, he shold be bylouyd, though they hadde hated hym to fore; yf he had the ring vpon hym, they shold forgete theyr angre as sone as they sawe hym. Also though he were al naked in a felde agayn an hondred armed men, he shold be wel herted, and escape fro them with worship. But he moste be a noble gentle man, and haue no chorles condicions, for thenne the stone had no myght. And by cause this stone was so precious and good, I thought in myself that I was not able ne worthy to bere it, and therefore I sente it to my dere lord the kyng; for I knowe hym for the moste noble that now lyueth, and also alle our welfare and worship lyeth on hym, and for he shold be kepte fro alle drede, nede, and ungheluck.

I fonde this rynge in my fadres tresour, and in the same place I toke a glasse or mirrour, and a combe whiche my wyf wold algates haue. A man myght wondre that sawe thise jewellis. I sente thyse to my lady the quene, for I haue founden her good and gracious to me. This combe myght not be moche preysed; hit was made of a clene noble beest named Panthera, whiche fedeth hym bytwene the grete Inde and erthly Paradyse. He is so lusty fayr, and of colour, that ther is no colour vnder the heuen but somme lyknes is in hym. Therto he smelleth so swete, that the sauour of hym boteth alle syknessis; and for his beaute and swete smellyng all other beestis folowe hym, for by his swete sauour, they ben heled of all syknessis.

This Panthera hath a fair boon, brode and thynne,

whan so is that this beeste is slayn, al the swete odour restid in the bone whiche can not be broken, ne shal neuer rote, ne be destroyed by fyre, by water, ne by smytyng, hit is so hard, tyght, and faste, and yet it is lyght of weyght. The swete odour of it hath grete myght, that who that smelleth it sette nought by none other luste in the world, and is easyd and quyte of alle maner diseases, and infirmytes. And also he is joconde and glad in his herte.

This combe is polysshid as it were fyne syluer, and the teeth of it ben smal and straite; and bytwen the gretter teeth and the smaller, is a large felde, and space, where is caruen many an ymage, subtilly made and enameld aboute with fyn gold. The felde is checked with sable and siluer, enameld with cybore and asure. And ther in is thistorye how Venus, Juno, and Pallas, strof for thapple of gold, whiche eche of them wold haue had, whiche contrauersye was sette upon Parys, that he shold gyue it to the fayrest of them thre.

Parys was that tyme an herde man and kepte his faders beestis and sheep without Troye. Whan he had resceyuid thapple, Juno promysyd to hym yf he wolde juge that she myght haue thapple, he shold haue the moste richesse of the world. Pallas said, yf she myght have theapple, she wold gyve hym wysedom and strength, and make hym so grete a lorde that he shold overcome alle his enemyes, and whom he wold. Venus saide, What nedest thou richesse or strengthe? art not thou Priams sone, and Hector is thy brother, whiche haue al Asye under their power? Art thou not one

of the possessours of grete Troye? Yf thou wylt gyve to me thapple I shal gyve the richest tresour of the world, and that shal be the fayrest woman that ever had lyf on erthe; ne never shal none be born fairer than she. Then shal thou be richer than riche, and shal clymme above al other, for that is the tresour that no man can preyse ynough, for honest, fair, and good women can put a way many a sorow fro the herte; they be shamefast and wyse, and brynge a man in every joye and blysse.

Parys herde this Venus, whiche presented hym this grete joye and fayr lady, and prayed her to name this fayr lady, that was so fair, and where she was. Venus saide, It is Helene, kynge Menelaus wyf, of Grece. Ther lyveth not a nobler, richer, gentiller, ne wyser wyf in al the world. Thenne Parys gaf to her thapple, and said that she was fayrest. How that he gate afterward Helene by the helpe of Venus, and how he brought her in to Troye, and wedded her; the grete love and ioly lyf that they had to gydre, was al carven in the felde, every thyng by hym self, and the story wreton.

Now ye shal here of the mirrour. The glas that stode theron was of suche vertu that men myght see therin all that was don within a myle, of men, of beestis, and of al thynge that men wold desire, to wyte, and knowe. And what man loked in the glasse had he ony dissease, of prickyng, or motes, smarte, or perles in his eyen, he shold be anon heled of it. Suche grete vertue had the glas.

Is it thenne wondre yf I be mevyd and angry for to lose suche maner jewellis. The tree in whiche this

glas stode was lyght and faste, and was named Cetyne, hit sholde endure ever, er it wold rote, or wormes shold hurte it; and therfore kynge Salamon seelyd his temple wyth the same wode withynforth. Men preysed it deerer than fyn gold, hit is like to tre of Hebenus, of whiche wode kynge Crompart made his hors of tree for love of kynge Morcadigas doughter, that was so fayr, whom he had wende for to have wonne.

That hors was so made within, that wosomever rodé on it, yf he wolde, he shold be within lesse than an hour, an hondred myle thens; and that was wel prevyd, for Cleomedes, the kynges sone, wolde not byleve that hors of tree had suche myght and vertue. He was yonge, lusty, and hardy, and desyred to doo grete dedes of prys, for to be renomed in this world, and leep on this hors of tree. Crompart torned a pynne that stode on his brest, and anon the hors lyfte hym up, and wente out of the halle by the wyndowe, and er one myght saye his Pater Noster, he was goon more ten myle waye. Cleomedes was sore aferd, and supposed never to have torned agayn, as thistorye therof telleth more playnly; but how grete drede he had, and how ferre that he rood upon that horse made of the tree of Hebenus, er he coude knowe the arte and crafte how he shold torne hym, and how joyeful he was whan he knewe it, and how men sorowed for hym, and how he knewe all this, and the joye therof whan he cam agayn, al this I pass over for losyng of tyme, but the moste parte of alle cam to by the vertue of the wode, of whiche wode the tree that the glas stode in was made:

and that was without forth of the glas half a foot brood, wherin stode somme strange hystoryes, whiche were of gold, of sable, of silver, of yelow, asure, and cynope. Thyse sixe colowrs were therin wrought in suche wise as it behoved, and under every hystorye the wordes were graven and enameld, that every man myght understande what eche historye was.

After my jugement ther was never myrour so costly, so lustly, ne so playsaunt. In the begynnyng stode there an horse made fatte, stronge, and sore enuyous upon an herte, whiche ran in the feeld so ferre and swyftly, that the hors was angry that he ran so ferre to fore hym, and coude not overtake hym. He thought he shold cacche hym, and subdue hym, though he shold suffre moche payne therfore. The horse spack tho to a herdeman in this wyse. Yf thou cowdest taken an herte that I wel can shewe the, thou sholdest haue grete prouffyt therof: thou sholdest selle dere his hornes, his skyn and his flesshe. The herdeman sayd, How may I come by hym. The hors saide, Sytte vpon me, and I shal bere the, and we shal hunte hym til he be take.

The herdeman sprange and satte vpon the hors and sawe the herte, and he rode after, but the herte was lyght of foot, and swyft, and out ran the hors ferre. They honted so ferre after hym that the horse was wery, and said to the herdeman that satte on hym, Now sytte of, I wil reste me: I am al wery, and gyue me leue to goo fro the. The herdeman saide, I haue arested the, thow mayst not escape fro me. I haue a

brydle on thy hede and sporis on my heles, thou shalt neuer haue thanke herof. I shal bydwynge and subdue the, haddest thou sworn the contrarye. See how the horse brought hym self in thraldom, and was taken in his owne nette. How may one better be taken than by his owne propre enuye suffre hym self to be taken and riden; ther ben many that laboure to hurte other, and they them seluen ben hurte and rewarded with the same.

Ther was also made an asse and an hound; whiche dwelled bothe with a riche man. The man louyd his hound wel, for he pleyde ofte with hym as folke doo with houndis. The hound leep vp and pleyd with his tayl, and lycked his maister aboute the mouth. This sawe Bowdwyn the asse, and had grete spyte therof in his herte, and said to hym self, how may this be and what may my lorde see on this fowle hound, whom I neuer see doth good ne proffyt, sauf spryngeth on hym and kysseth hym, but me whom men putten to laboure, to bere and drawe, and doo more in a weke than he wyth his xv shold doo in a hole yere; and yet sytteth he neuertheles by hym at the table, and there eteth bones, flessh, and fatte trenchours; and I haue nothyng but thystles and nettles, and lye on nyghtes on the harde erthe and suffre many a scorn. I wyl no lengre suffre this. I wylle thynke how I may gete my lordes loue and frendship lyke as the hound doth.

Therwyth cam the lorde, and the asse lyft vp his tayl and sprang with his fore feet on the lordes sholdres. And blered, grennyd, and songe, and with his

feet made two grete bules aboute his eris; and put forth his mouth and wold haue kyssed the lordes mouth as he had seen the hound doon. Tho cryde the lorde sore aferde, Help! help! this asse wil slee me. Thenne cam his seruauntis with good stauis, and smyten and bete the asse so sore that he had wende he shold haue loste his lyf. Tho retorned he to his stable and ete thistles and nettles and was an asse as he to fore was. In lyke wyse, who so haue enuye and spyte of an others welfare, and were seruyd in lyke wyse, it shold be wel behoeful. Therfor it is concluded that the asse shal ete thistelis and netteles and bere the sacke. Though men wold doo hym worship he can not vnderstonde it, but must vse old lewde maners. Where as asses geten lordshippis, there men see selde good rewle. For they take hede of nothyng but on theyr synguler prouffyt; yet ben they take vp and rysen grete, the more pyte is.

Herken ferther, how my fadre and Tybert the catte wende to gydre, and had sworn by theyr trouthe, that for loue ne hate they shold not departe; and what they gate, the shold departe to eche the half. Thenne on a tyme they sawe hunters comyng ouer the felde with many houndes. They leep and ranne faste fro them ward, al that they myhte, as they that were aferd of theyr lyf. Tybert, said the foxe, whyther shal we now best flee? The hunters haue espyed vs, knowe ye ony helpe? My fadre trusted on the promyse that eche made to other. And that he wolde for no nede departe fro hym. Tybert, said he, I haue a sack ful of wyles

yf we haue nede; as ferre as we abyde to gydre we nede not to doubte hunters ne houndes.

Tybert bigan to syghe and was sore aferd, and saide, Reynart, what auayllen many wordes? I knowe but one wyle; and theder muste I too. And tho clamme he vpon an hye tree in to the toppe vnder the leuys, where as hunter ne hounde myght doo hym non harme, and lefte my fadre allone in jeoparde of his lyf: for the hunters sette on hym the houndes alle that they coude. Men blewe the hornes and cryed and halowed The foxe. Slee and take! Whan Tybert the catte sawe that, he mocked and scorned my fadre and said, what Reynart, cosyn, vnbynde now your sakke wher al the wylis ben in, it is now tyme; ye be so wyse called, helpe your self, for ye haue nede.

This mocke muste my fadre here of hym to whom he had most his trust on. And was almoste taken and nyghe his deth; and he ranne and fledde wyth grete fere of his lyf and lete his male slyde of by cause he wold be lyghter. Yet al that coude not helpe hym, for the houndes were to swyft and shold haue byten hym; but he had one auenture, that ther by he fond an old hole, wherin he crepte, and escaped thus the honters and houndes. Thus helde this false deceyuer Tibaert his sykernes that he had promysed.

Alas! how many ben there now a dayes that kepe not theyr promyse and sette not therby though they breke it. And though I hate Tybaert herfore, is it wonder? But I doo not sikerly; I loue my sowle to wel therto. Neuertheles yf I sawe hym in auenture and

mysfalle in his body or in his goodes, I trow hit shold not moche goo to my herte so that another dyde it. Neuertheles I shal neyther hate hym ne haue enuye at hym. I shal for goddes loue forgyue hym, yet is it not so clere out of myn herte, but a lytyl ylle wylle to hym ward abideth therin, as this cometh to my remembraunce, and the cause is that the sensualyte of my flessh fyghteth ayenst reson.

Ther stode also in that myrrour, of the wulf. How he fonde ones vpon an heth a dede hors, slayn: but al the flessh was eten. Thenne wente he and bote grete morsellis of the bones, that for hongre he toke thre or iiij att ones and swolowed them in. For he was so gredy that one of the bones stack thwart in his mouth. Wherof he had grete payne, and was in grete fere of his lyf. He soughte al aboute for wyse masters and surgyens, and promysed grete yeftis for to be heled of his disease.

Atte laste whan he coude nowher fynde remedye, he cam to the crane wyth his longe necke and bille; and prayde hym to helpe hym, and he wolde loue and reward hym so wel that he sholde euer be the better. The crane herked after this grete rewarde, and put his heed in to his throte and brought out the boon wyth his bylle. The wulf sterte a syde wyth the pluckyng and cryde out, Alas thou doost me harme! but I forgyue it the: doo no more soo, I wolde not suffre it of an other. The crane saide, Sir Isegrym, goo and be mery, for ye be al hool now. Gyue to me that ye promysed. The wulf saide, Wyl ye here what he

sayth: I am he that hath suffred, and have cause to playne, and he wille have good of me. He thanketh not me of the kyndnes that I dyde to hym; he put his heed in my mouth, and I suffred hym to drawe it out hole, without hurtyng; and he dyde to me also harme, and yf ony hier shold have a reward, it shold be I by ryght.

Thus the unkynde men now a dayes rewarde them that doo them good. Whan the false and subtyl aryse and become grete, thenne goth worship and prouffyt al to nought. Ther ben many of right that ought reward and doo good to suche as have holpen hem in her nede, that now fynde causes and saye they be hurte, and wolde have amendis, where they ought to rewarde and make amendes them self. Therfore it is said, and trowthe it is, whoo that wyl chyde or chastyse, see that he be clere hym self.

Alle this, and moche more than I now can wel remembre, was made and wrought in this glasse; the maister that ordeyned it was a connyng man, and a profounde clerk in many sciences; and by cause thise jewells were over good and precious for me to kepe and have, therfore I sente them to my dere lord the kynge, and to the quene in presente. Where ben they now that gyve to theyr lordes suche presentes? the sorowe that my ij. chyldren made whan I sente away the glasse was grete, for they were woned to loke therin and see them self how theyr clothyng and araye bycam them on their bodyes.

O alas; I knewe not that Kywart the hare was so

nyghe his deth whan I delyveryd hym the male with thise jewellis! I wiste not to whom I myght better have taken them, though it shold have coste me my lyf, than hym and Bellart the ramme. They were two of my best frendis. Oute, alas, I crye upon the murderar! I shal knowe who it was, though I shold renne thurgh al the world to seke hym; for murdre abydeth not hyd, it shal come out. Peraventure he is in this companye that knoweth where Kywart is bicomen, though he telleth it not; for many false shrewys walke wyth good men, fro whom no man can kepe hym. They knowen theyr craft so wel and can wel covere their falsenes.

But the most woudre that I have is that my lord the kyng hier saith so felly, that my fadre nor I dyde hym never good; that thynketh me mervayl of a kynge. But ther come so many thyngis to fore hym that he forgeteth that one wyth that other, and so faryth by me. Dere lorde, remembre not ye whan my lord your fadre lyvyd, and ye an yonglyng of two yere were, that my fadre cam fro skole fro Monpellier, where as he had fyve yere studyed in receptes of medycynes. He knewe al the tokenes of the uryne as wel as his honde; and also alle the herbes and nature of them whiche were viscose or laxatyf. He was a synguler maister in that science, he myght wel were cloth of sylke and a gylt gyrdle.

Whan he cam to court he fonde the kynge in a grete sekenes, wherof he was sory in his hert, for he lovyd hym above alle other lordes. The kynge wold not

forgoo hym, for whan he cam alle other had leve to walke where they wold, he trusted none so moche as hym. He said, Reynard, I am seke, and fele me the lenger the werse. My fadre said, My dere lord, here is an urynal, assone as I may see it I shal telle what sekenes it is, and also how ye shal be holpen. The kynge dyde as he conseilled hym, for he trusted noman better that lyuyd. Though so were that my fader dyde not as he shold have don to you, but that was by counseyl of evyl and foule beestis, I had wonder therof but it was a rasyng ayenst his deth. He sayd, My lord, yf ye wyl be hole, ye muste ete the lyver of a wulf of vii. yere old, that may ye not leve, or ellis ye shal deye, for your uryne sheweth it playnly.

The wulf stode ther by and said nought, but the kynge said to hym, Sir Ysegrym, now ye here wel that I muste have your lyver yf I wil be hool. Tho answerd the wulf, and said, Nay, my lord, not soo. I wote wel I am not yet fyve yere olde, I have herde my moder saie soo. My fadre sayd, What skylleth his wordes? late hym be opened and I shal knowe by the lyver yf it be good for yow or not. And therwyth the wulf was had to kychen, and his lyver taken out, whiche the kynge ete, and was anon al hole of alle his sekenes. Thenne thanketh he my fadre moche, and commanded alle his household, upon their lyvys, that after that tyme they shold calle hym Mayster Reynard.

He abode stylle by the kynge, and was beleuid of alle thyngis, and muste alleway go by his side. And the kynge gaf to hym a garlond of rooses, whiche he

muste alway were on his heed. But now this is al torned. Alle the old good thingis that he dyde, ben forgoten; and thise covetouse and rauenous shrewys ben takin vp and sette on the hye benche, and ben herde and made grete; and the wyse folke ben put a back. By whiche thise lordes ofte lacke, and cause them to be in moche trouble and sorowe; for whan a couetous man of lowe byrthe is made a lord, and is moche greet, and aboue his neyghbours hath power and myght, thenne he knoweth not hym self, ne whens he is a comen, and hath no pyte on nomans hurte; ne hereth nomans requeste, but yf he may haue grete yeftis. Al his entent and desyre is to gadre good and to be gretter. O how many couetous men ben now in lordes courtes. They flatre and smeke, and plese the prynce for theyr synguler auayl. But and the prynce had nede of them or their good they sholde rather suffre hym to deye, or fare right hard, er they wold gyue or lene hym. They be lyke the wulf that had leuer the kynge had deyed than he wolde gyue hym his lyuer. Yet had I leuer er the kynge or the quene shold fare amys, that xx suche wulves shold lose theyr lyues; hit were also the leest losse.

My lorde al this bifelle in your yougthe that my fader dyde thus. I trowe ye haue forgoten it. And also I haue myself don yow reuerence, worship and courtosye. Vnroused be it, thaugh ye nowe thanke me but lytyl, but parauenture ye remembred not that I shal nowe saye; not to ony forwyttyng of yow, for ye be worthy alle worship and reuerence that ony

man can doo. That haue ye of Almyghty God by enheritance, of your noble progenytours; wherfor I your humble subgette and seruant am bounden to doo to yow alle the seruyse that I can or maye.

I cam on a tyme walkyng with the wulf Isegrym. And we hadde goten vnder vs bothe a swyne. And for his lowde cryyng we bote hym to deth, and, Syre, ye cam fro ferre out of a groue ayenst vs. Ye salewed vs frendly, and saide, we were welcome, and that ye and my lady the quene whiche cam after yow hadde grete hongre and had nothyng for to ete, and prayde vs for to gyue yow parte of our wynnyng. Isegrym spack so softe that a man vnnethe myght here hym, but I spack out, and saide: Ye, my lord, with a good will, though it were more, we wil wel that ye haue parte. And thenne the wulf departed as he was wont to doo, he departed and toke that on half for hym self. And he gaf yow a quarter; for yow and the quene. That other quarter he ete and bote as hastely as he myghte, bicause he wolde ete it allone. And he gaf to me but half the longes, that I pray God that euyl mote he fare.

Thus shewde he his condicions and nature. Er men shold haue songen a Credo, ye my lord had eten your part, And yet wold ye fayn had more, for ye were not ful. And bicause he gaf you no more ne proffred yow, ye lyfte vp your right fote and smote hym bytwene the eris, that ye tare his skynne ouer his eyen, and tho he myght no lengre abyde, but he bledde, howled, and ran away, and lefte his part there lye.

Tho said ye to hym, haste yow agayn hether and brynge to vs more. And here after see better to how ye dele and parte. Thenne said I, My lord yf it plese yow I wyll goo wyth hym. I wote wel what ye saide. I wente wyth hym, he bledde and groned as sore as he was al softly. He durst not crye lowde. We wente so ferre that we brought a calf.

And whan ye sawe vs come therwyth, ye lawhyd, for ye were wel plesyd. Ye said to me that I was swyft in hontyng. I see wel that ye can fynde wel whan ye take it vpon yow, ye be good to sende forth in a nede. The calf is goode and fatte. Herof shal ye be the delar. I saide, My lord wyth a good wyl. The one half my lord shal be for yow. And that other half for my lady the quene. The moghettis, lyuer, longes, and the inward, shal be for your chyldren. The heed shal Isegrym the wulf haue, and I wyl haue the feet. Tho said ye, Reynart who hath taught you to departe so courtoisly. My lord, said I, that hath don this preest that sytteth her with the blody crowne, he lost his skynne wyth the vncourtoys departyng of the swyn. And for his couetyse and rauyne he hathe bothe hurte and shame. Alas ther ben many wulues now a dayes that without right and reson destroye and ete them that they may haue the ouerhand of. They spare neyther flesh ne blood, frende ne enemye: what they can gete, that take they. O woo be to that lande and to townes, where as the wulues haue the ouerhand.

My lord, this and many other good thing haue I don

for you, that I cowde wel telle, yf it were not to long, of whiche now ye remembre litil by the wordes that I her of you. Yf ye wold al thyng ouersee wel, ye wold not saye as ye doo. I haue seen the day that ther shold no grete mater be concluded in this court without myn aduyse. Al be yt that this auenture is now fallen. It myght happen yet that my wordes shal be herd and also bileuyd as wel as an others as ferre as ryght wyl, for I desyre none other, for yf ther be ony can saye and make good by suffycient witnesis that I haue trespaced, I wyll abyd al the right and lawe that may come therof, and yf ony saie on me ony thyng of whiche he can brynge no wytnesses, late me thenne be rewlyd after the lawe and custome of thys court.

The kynge said, Reynart ye saye resonably. I knowe not of Kywarts deth more than that Bellyn the ramme brought his heed hether in the male. Therof I lete yow goo quyte. For I haue no wytnes therof.

My dere lord, said Reynard, God thanke yow; sykerly ye doo wel, for his deth maketh me so sorowful, that me thynketh my herte wyl breke in two. O whan they departed fro me myn herte was so heuy, that me thought I shold haue swoned. I wote wel it was a token of the losse that tho was so nyghe comyng to me.

Alle the moost parte of them that were there, and herde the foxes wordes of the jewellis, and how he made his contenance and stratchid hym, had veryly supposed that it had not be fayned, but that it had be

tryewe. They were sory of his losse and mysauenture; and also of his sorowe. The kynge and the quene had bothe pyte of hym; and bad hym to make not to moche sorowe, but that he sholde endeuere hym to feche hem. For he had moche preysed hem, that they had grete wyl and desyre to haue them. And by cause he had made them to vnderstonde that he had sente these jewellis to them, though they neuer had them yet they thankyd hym. And prayd hym to helpe that they myght haue them.

The foxe vnderstode theyr menyng wel. He thought toward them but lytyl good. For al that, he said, God thanke yow, my lord, and my lady, that ye so frendly comforte me in my sorow. I shal not reste nyght ne day, ne alle they that wyl doo ony thyng for me, but renne, and praye, thretene, and aske alle the four corners of the world, thaugh I shold euer seche, tyl that I knowe where they ben bicomen; and I pray you my lord the kynge, that yf they were in suche place as I cowde not gete them by prayer, by myght, ne by request, that ye wold assiste me and abide by me: for it towcheth your self, and the good is youris. And also it is your part to doo justyse on thefte and murdre whiche bothe ben in this caas.

Reynart, said the kynge, that shal I not leue whan ye knowe wher they ben. Myn helpe shal be alway redy for you. O dere lorde, this is to moche presented to me, yf I had power and myght I sholde deserue ayenst yow.

Now hath the foxe his mater fast and fayr. For he

hath the kynge in his hand as he wold. Hym thought that he was in better caas than it was lyke to haue be. He hath made so many lesynges that he may goo frely wher he wyl without complaynyng of ony of them alle. Sauf of Isegrym, which was to hym ward angry and dysplesyd, and saide, O noble kynge, ar ye so moche chyldyssh that ye byleve this false and subtyl shrewe, and suffre your self wyth false lyes thus to be deceyvyd? Of fayth it shold be longe or I shold byleve hym. He is in murdre and treson al be wrapped; and he mocketh you to fore your visage. I shal telle hym a nother tale. I am glad that I see now hym here. Al his lesynges shal not avaylle hym er he departe fro me.

HOW YSEGRYM THE WULF COMPLAYNED AGAYN ON THE FOXE. CAPITULO XXXIIJ.

My lord, I pray you to take hede, this false theef betraied my wyf ones, fowle and dishonestly. Hit was so that in a wynters day that they wente to gyder thurgh a grete water; and he bare my wyf an honde that he wold teche her take fysshe wyth her tayl, and that she shold late it hange in the water a good while, and ther shold so moche fysshe cleue on it that foure of them shold not conne ete it.

The fool, my wyf, supposed he had said trouthe; and she wente in the myre to the bely to, er she cam in to the water. And whan she was in the deppest of the water, he bad her holde her tayl stylle, til that the

fysshe were comen. She helde her tayl so longe that it was frorn harde in the yse, and coude not plucke it out. And whan he sawe that, he sprange up after on her ; alas ! so knauisshly that I am ashamed to telle it. She coude not defende herself, the sely beest, she stode so depe in the myre. Hereof he can not saye naye, for as I wente above vpon the banke I sawe hym bynethe. Alas ! what payne suffred I, tho at my herte. I had almost for sorow loste my fyve wits ; and cryde so lowde as I myght, Reynart, what do ye there ? And whan he sawe me so nyghe tho lepe he of, and wente his waye.

I wente to her in grete hevvinesse ; and wente depe in that myre and that water er I coude breke the yse ; and moche payne suffred she er she coude have out her taylle ; and yet lefte a gobet of her tayle behynd her. And we were lyke bothe therby to have lost our lyves, for she galped and cryde so loude for the smarte that she had, er she cam out, that the men of the village cam out with stavys and byllis, with flaylis and pykforkes ; and the wyvis wyth theyr distavis, and cryed dyspytously Sle ! sle ! and smyte down right. I was never in my lyf so aferde : for unnethe we escape, we ran so fast that we swette. Ther was a vylayne that stake on vs wyth a pyke, whiche hurted vs sore. He was stronge, and swyfte a fote. Hadde it not be nyght, certaynly we had ben slayn.

The fowle olde quenes wold fayn have beten us. They saide that we had byten theyr sheep. They

cursed vs with many a curse. Tho cam we in to a field ful of brome and brembles; there hydde we vs fro the vylaynes, and they durst not folowe vs ferther by nyght, but retorned home agayn.

See, my lord, thys fowle mater; this is murdre, rape, and treason, which ye ought to doo justyce theron sharply.

Reynard answerd and said, Yf this were trewe, it shold go to nyghe myn honour and worship. God forbede that it shold be founde trewe. But is wel trewe that I taught her how she sholde in a place catche fysshe, and shewde her a good waye for to goo over in to the water without goyng in to the myre; but she ranne so desyrously whan she herde me name the fysshe, that she nether way no path helde, but wente in to the yse wherin she was forfrorn; and that was by cause she abode to longe; she had fissh ynough yf she coude have be plesyd wyth mesure. It falleth ofte, who that wold have all, leseth alle. Over covetous was never good; for the beest can not be satisfyed. And whan I sawe her in the yse so faste, I wende to have holpen her, and heef and shoef, and stack here and there, to have brought her out; but it was al payne loste, for she was to hevy for me.

Tho cam Ysegrym and sawe how I shoef and stack, and dyde al my beste, and he a fowle chorle, fowle and rybadously sklaundryth me wyth her, as thyse fowle unthriftes ben wonte to do.

But, my dere lord, it was none otherwyse; he belyeth me falsely. Peradventure his eyen daselyd as

he loked from above down. He cryde and cursed me, and swore many an oth I shold dere abye it. When I herde hym so curse and thretene, I wente my waye, and lete him curse and menace til he was wery. And tho wente he and heef and shoef, and halpe his wyf out, and then he leep and ran, and she also, for to gete them an hete, and to warm them, or ellis they shold have deyed for colde. And what somever I have said a fore or after, that is clerely al trouthe. I wolde not for a thousand marke of fyn gold, lye to yow one lesying, it were not fyttyng for me. What somever falle of me, I shal saye the trouthe, lyke as myn elders have alway don syth the tyme that fyrst we vnderstode reson ; and if ye be in doubte of ony thyng that I have said otherwyse than trouth, gyve me respyte of viij dayes, that I may have couseyl ; and I shal brynge suche informacion wyth good tryew and suffycient recorde, that ye shal alle your lyf duryng truste and byleve me, and so shal all your counseyl also. What have I to doo wyth the wulf, hit is to fore clerly ynowh shewde that he is a foule vylaynous kaytyf, and an unclene beest when he deled and departed the swyn.

So it is now knowen to yow alle by his owen wordes that is a deffamer of wymmen, as moche as in him is. Ye may wel marke everychone. Who shold luste to do that game to one so stedfast a wyf, beyng in so grete peryll of deth. Now aske ye hys wyf, yf it be so as he sayth ; yf she wyl saye the trouth, I wote wel she shal saye as I doo.

Tho spack Erswynde, the wulfis wyf: Ach felle reynart, no man can kepe hym self fro the; thou canst so wel uttre thy wordes and thy falsenes, and treson sette forth; but it shall be euyl rewarded in the ende. How broughtest thou me ones in to the welle where the two bokettys henge by one corde rennyng thurgh one polley which wente one up and another down. Thou sattest in that one bocket bynethe in the pytte in great drede. I cam theder, and herde the syghe and make sorrow, and axed the how thou camest there. Thou saidest that thou haddest there so many good fysshes eten out of the water that thy bely wolde breste. I said, Tell me how I shall come to the. Thenne saidest thou, Aunte, sprynge in to that boket that hangeth there, and ye shal come anon to me. I dyde so, and I wente downward, and ye cam upward. Tho was I alle angry: thou saidest, Thus fareth the world, that one goth up, and another goth down. Tho sprang ye forth, and wente your waye, and I abode there allone, syttyng an hole day sore an hongryd, and a colde; and therto had I many a stroke er I coude gete thens.

Aunte, sayd the foxe, though the strokes dyde you harme, I had lever ye had them than I, for ye may better bere them, for one of vs must nedes have had them. I taught yow good; wyl ye vnderstande it, and thynke on it, that ye another tyme take better hede, and bileve no man over hastely; is he frende or cosyn. For every man seketh his owe prouffyt. They be now

fooles that do not so; and specyally whan they be in jeopardy of theyr lyves.

A FAYR PARABLE OF THE FOXE AND THE WULF.

CAPITULO XXXIIIJ.

My lord, said dame Erswyn, I pray yow here how he can blowe with alle wyndes; and how fayr bryngeth he his maters forth. Thus hath he brought me many tyme in scathe and hurte, said the wulf. He hath ones betrayed me to the she ape, myn aunte; where I was in grete drede and fere, for I lefte there almost myn one ere. Yf the foxe wil telle it how it byfel, I wyl gyve hym the fordele thereof; for I can not telle it so wel, but he shal beryspe me.

Wel, said the foxe, I shal telle it wythout stameryng; I shal saye the trouth. I pray yow herken me. He cam in to the wode, and complayned to me that he had grete hongre; for I sawe hym never so ful, but he wold alway have had fayn more. I have wonder where the mete becometh that he destroyeth. I see now on his contenance that he begynneth to grymme for hongre. Whan I herde hym so complayne, I had pyte of hym; and I said I was also hongry. Thenne wente we half a day togydre, and fond nothyng, tho whyned he and cryted, and said he myght goo no ferther. Thenne espyed I a grete hool, standyng in the myddys vnder an hawe whiche was thyck of brembles; and I herde a russhyng therin; I wist not what

it was. Thenne said I, Goo therin, and loke yf ther be ony thyng ther for us; I wote wel ther is somwhat. Tho said he, Cosyn, I wolde not crepe in to that hole for twenty pound, but I wist fyrst what is therin; me thynketh that ther is some perylous thyng. But I shal abyde here vnder this tree, yf ye wil goo therin to fore; but come anon again, and late me wete what thyng is therin. Ye can many a subtylte and wel helpe your selfe, and moche better than I.

See, my lord, the kynge; thus he made me, poure wight, to goo to fore in the daunger; and he, whiche is grete, longe, and stronge, abode withoute, and rested hym in pees: awayte yf I dyde not for him there. I wold not suffre the drede and fere that I there suffred for al the good in erthe; but yf I wyste how to escape. I wente hardyly in. I fonde the way derke, longe, and brood. Er I right in the hool cam, so espyed I a grete light; whiche cam in fro that one syde; ther laye in a grete ape with tweyne grete wyde eyen, and they glymmed as a fyre. And she had a grete mouth with large teeth, and sharp naylles on hir feet, and on her handes. I wende hit had be a mermoyse, a baubyn, or a mercatte, for I sawe never fowler beest. And by her laye thre of her children, whiche were right fowle; for they were right lyke the moder. Whan they sawe me come, they gapeden wyde on me, and were al stylle.

I was aferd, and wold wel I had ben thens; but I thoughte, I am therin, I muste ther thurgh, and come out as wel as I maye. As I sawe her me thought she semed more than Ysegrym the wulf. And her chyl-

dren were more than I. I sawe never a fowler meyne; they leye on fowle heye which was al be fouled. They were byslabbed and byclagged to their eres to in her owen donge. Hit stanke that I was almost smoldred therof. I durst not saye but good; and thenne I said, Aunte, goed gyve yow good daye, and alle my cosyns, your fayr chyldren, they be of theyr age the fayrest that ever I sawe. O Lord God! how wel plese they me; how lovely, how fayr ben they. Eche of them for their beaute myght be a grete kyngis sone. Of right we ought to thanke yow, that ye thus encrece oure lygnage. Dere aunte, whan I herde saye that ye were delyverd and leyd down, I coude no lenger abyde, but muste come and frendly vysite yow. I am sory that I had not erst knowen it.

Reynard, cosyn, saide he, ye be welcome for that ye have founde me, and thus come see me, I thanke yow. Dere cosyn, ye be right trewe, and named right wyse in alle londes, and also that ye gladly furthre and brynge your lignage in grete worship. Ye muste teche my chyldren with the youris, som wysedom, that they may knowe what they shal doo and leue. I have thought on yow; for gladly ye goo and felowship with the good.

O, how wel was I plesyd whan I herde thise wordes. This deservyd I at the begynnyng whan I callyd her aunte; how be it that she was nothyng sybbe to me; for my right aunte is dame Rukenawe, that yonder standeth, whiche is woned to brynge forth wise chyldren. I saide, Aunte, my lyf and my good is at your

commandement; and what I may doo for yow by nyght and by daye. I wylle gladly teche them alle I can. I wolde fayn have be thens for the stenche of them, and also I had pyte of the grete hongre that Isegrym had.

I saide, Aunte, I shal commyte you and your fayr chyldren to God, and take my leve. My wyf shal thynke longe after me.

Dere cosyn, said she, ye shal not departe til ye have eten, for yf ye dyde, I wold saie ye were not kynde. Tho stode she up, and brought me in an other hool, where as was moche mete of hertes and hyndes, roes, fesauntes, partrychs, and moche other venyson, that I wondred fro whens al this mete myght come. And whan I had eaten my bely ful, she gaf me a grete pece of an hynde for to ete wyth my wyf and wyth my houshold whan I come home. I was ashamed to take it; but I myght none other wyse doo. I thankyd her, and toke my leve. She bad me I shold come sone agayn. I sayd, I wold; and so departed thens meryly, that I so wel had spedde.

I hasted me out, and whan I cam and sawe Ysegrym, whiche laye gronyng; and I axed hym how he ferde; he said, Nevew, al evyll, for it is wonder that I lyve. Brynge ye ony mete to ete, I deye for honger. Tho had I compassion of hym, and gaf hym that I had, and saved hym there his lyf; wherof thenne he thanked me gretely; how be it that he now oweth me evyl wyl.

He had eten this vp anon. Tho, said he, Reynard,

dere cosyn, what fonde ye in that hool? I am more hongry now than I was to fore; my teeth ben now sharped to ete. I said thenne, Eme, haste yow thenne lyghtly in to that hool. Ye shal fynde there ynough. There lieth myn aunte wyth her chyldren. Yf ye wyl spare the trouth, and lye grete lesynges, ye shal have there al your desire; but, and ye saye trouth, ye shal take harme. My lord, was not this ynough sayd and warned, who so wold vnderstonde it that al that he fonde he shold saye the contrayre. But rude and plompe beestis can not vnderstonde wysdom; therfore hate they alle subtyl inuencions, for they can not conceyve them. Yet, nevertheles, he saide he wolde goo inne, and lye so many lesynges er he sholde myshappe, that alle man sholde have wondre of it; and so wente forth in to that fowle stynkyng hool, and fonde the marmosette. She was lyke the devyl's doughter, and on her chyldren hynge moche fylth cloterd in gobettis.

Tho cryde he, Alas! me growleth of thyse fowle nyckers, come they out of helle? Men may make devylles aferd of hem. Goo and drowne them, that evyl mote they fare. I sawe never fowler wormes; they make al myn heer to stande right up.

Sir Ysegrym, said she, what may I doo therto? they ben my chyldren, and I muste be their moder. What lyeth that in your waye? Whether they be fowl or fayr they have yow nothyng coste. There hath ben one to-day byfore yow, whiche was to them nyhe of kyn, and was your better and wyser; and he sayde that they were fayr. Who hath sente yow

hyther with thyse tydynges? Dame, wyl ye wytte, I wylle ete of your mete ; hit is better bestowed on me than on thyse fowle wyghtes. She said, Heir is no mete. He saide, Here is ynough ; and ther wyth he sterte with his hede toward the mete, and wolde have goon in to the hool wher the mete was. But myn aunte sterte vp wyth her chyldren, and ronne to hym wyth their sharp longe nayles so sore that the blode ran over his eyen. I herde hym cry sore and howle, but I knowe of no defence that he made, but that he ran faste out of the hool. And he was there cratched and byten ; and many an hool had they made in his cote and skyn. His visage was alle on a blood, and almost he had loste his one ere. He groned and complayned to me sore.

Thenne asked I hym yf he had wel lyed? He sayd, I saide lyke as I sawe and fonde ; and that was a fowle bytche with many fowle wyghtis. Nay eme, said I, ye shold have said, Fayr nece, how fare ye and your fair chyldren, whiche ben my wel belovid cosyns.

The wulf sayd, I had lever that they were hanged er I that saide.

Ye eme, therefore muste ye resseyue suche maner payment. Hit is better other while to lye than to saye trouthe. They that ben better, wyser, and strenger than we be, have doon so to fore vs.

See, my lord the kyng, thus gate he his rede coyf. Now stondeth he al so symply as he knewe no harme. I pray yow aske ye hym yf it was not thus ; he was not fer of, yf I wote it wel.

HOW YSEGRYM PROFERD HIS GLOVE TO THE FOXE FOR TO FYGHT WYTH HYM.

CAPITULO XXXV.

The wulf sayd, I may wel forbere your mockes and your scornes, and also your felle venymous wordes, strong theef that ye ar. Ye saide that I was almost dede for hungre when ye helpe me in my nede. That is falsely lyed, for it was but a boon that ye gaf to me, ye had eten away alle the flessh that was theron. And ye mocke me and saye that I am hongry here where I stande ; that toucheth my worship to nygh. What many a spyty worde have ye brought forth wyth false lesyngis ; and that I have conspyred the kynges deth fro the tresour that ye have seid to hym is in Hulsterlo. And ye have also my wyf shamed and sklandred that ye shal never recovre it, and I shold ever be disworshipped therby, yf I avengyd it not. I have forborn yow longe, but now ye shal not escape me. I can not make herof greet preef ; but I saye here to fore my lord, and to fore alle them that ben here, that thou art a false traytour and a morderar ; and that shal I prove and make good on thy body wythin lystes in the felde, and that body ayenst body, and thenne shal our stryf have an ende. And therto I caste to the my glove ; and take thou it up. I shal have right of the or deye therfore.

Reynard the foxe thought how come I on this campyng, we ben not bothe lyke. I shal not wel come stonde ayenst this stronge theef ; all my proof is now come to an ende.

HOWE THE FOXE TOKE VP THE GLOVE. AND HOW THE KYNGE SETTE TO THEM DAYE AND FELDE FOR TO COME AND DOO THEYR BATTAYLLE.

CAPITULO XXXVJ.

Yet, thought the foxe, I have good avauntage. The clawes of his fore feet ben of, and his feet ben yet sore therof; whan for my sake he was vnshoed. He shal be somwhat the weyker. Thenne, said the foxe, Who that saith that I am a traytour or a morderar, I saie he lieth falsely, and that art thou specyally, Ysegrym. Thou bryngest me there as I wolde be. This have I ofte desyred. Lo! here is my plegge, that alle thy wordes ben falls; and that I shal defende me, and make good that thou lyest.

The kynge receyvyd the plegges, and amytted the bateyll, and asked borowes of them bothe, that on the morn they shold come and parforme theyr batayll, and doo as they ought to doo. Then the bere and catte were borowes for the wulf; and for the foxe were borowys Grymbert the dasse, and Byteluys.

HOW RUKENAWE THE SHE APE COUNSEYLLED THE FOXE HOW HE SHOLDE BYHAUE HYM IN THE FELDE AYENST THE WULF.

CAPITULO XXXVIJ.

The she ape saide to the foxe, Reyner, nevew, see that ye take hede in your batayll; be colde and wyse. Your eme taught me ones a prayer that is of moche vertue to hym that shal fyghte; and a grete maister, and a wyse clerk, and was abbot of Boudelo, that

taughted hym. He saide, Who that sayde deuoutly this prayer fastyng, shal not that day be overcomen in batayl, ne in fyghting. Therfore, dere neuew, be not aferd, I shal rede it over yow to-morow; thenne may ye be sure ynough of the wulf. Hit is bettre to fyghte than to have the necke asondre. I thanke yow, dere aunte, said the foxe. The quarel that I have is rightful, therfore I hope I shal spede wel; and that shal gretely be myne helpe.

Alle his lygnage abede by hym al the nyght, and helpe hym to dryve a way the tyme.

Dame Rukenawe the she ape, his aunte, thoughte alway on his prouffyt and fordele; and she dyde alle his heer fro the heed to the tayl be shorn of smothe; and she annoyted alle his body wyth oyle of olyve. And thenne was his body al so glat and slyper, that the wulf sholde have none holde on hym. And he was rounde and fatte also on his body. And she said to hym, Dere cosyn, ye muste now drynke moche, that to-morrow ye may the better when ye come to the felde. And whan nede is and tyme, so shal ye fil your rowhe tayll, and smyte the wulf therwyth in his berde. And yf ye myght hytte hym therwyth in his eyen, thenne shal ye byneme hym his syght, that shold moche hyndre hym. But ellis, hold alway your tayl faste bytwene your legges that he catch you not therby; and holde down your eris lyeng plat after your heed that he holde you not therby. And see wisely to yourself; and at begynnyng flee fro his strokes, and let hym sprynge and renne after you, and renne to fore where

as moste dust is ; and styre it wyth your feet, that it may flee in his eyen and that shal moche hyndre his syght. And whyle he rubbeth his eyen take your auantage, and smyte and byte hym there as ye may most hurte hym ; and alleway to hytte hym wyth your tayll ful in his visage, and that shal make hym so woo that he shal not wyte where he is. And late hym renne after yow for to make hym wery; yet his feet ben sore of that ye made hym to lose his shooes, and though he be greet he hath no herte. Neuew, certaynly this is my counseyll.

The connyng goth to fore strengthe, therfore see for your self, and sette your self wysely atte defence, that ye and we alle may have worship therof ; I wold be sory yf ye myshapped. I shal teche you the wordes that your eme Mertyn taught me, that ye may overcome your enemye, as I hope yow shal doo wythout doubt.

Therwyth she leyde her hand vpon his heed, and saide these wordes, Blaerde Shay Alphenio, Kasbue Gorsons alsbuifrio. Neuew, now be ye sure fro alle myschief and drede ; and I counseyle yow that ye reste yow a lytyl, for it is by the daye ye shal be the better dysposed. We shal awake you al in tyme.

Aunte, said the foxe, I am now glad. God thanke you, ye have don to me suche good. I can never deserve it fully agayn. Me thynketh ther may no thynge hurte me, syth that ye have said thyse holy wordes over me.

Tho wente he and leyd hym down vnder a tre in the

grasse and slepte tyl the sonne was rysen ; tho cam the otter and waked hym, and bad hym aryse, and gaf hym a good yong doke, and said, Dere cosyn, I have this nyght made many a leep in the water er I coude gette this yong fatte doke. I have taken it fro a fowler. Take and ete it.

Reynart sayde, This is good hansele, yf I refused this I were a fool. I thanke you, cosyn, that ye remembre me. Yf I lyve, I shal rewarde yow. The foxe ete the doke with oute sawce or breed ; it sauourd hym wel, and wente wel in. And he dranke therto iiij grete draughtis of water, thenne wente he to the bataylle warde, and alle they that louyd hym wente wyth hym.

HOWE THE FOXE CAM IN TO THE FELDE, AND HOW THEY FOUGHTEN.

CAPITULO XXXVIIJ.

Whan the kynge sawe Reynart thus shorn and oyled he said to him, Ey foxe, how wel can ye see for your self ? He wondred therof he was fowle to loke on. But the foxe saide not one worde, but kneled down lowe to therthe vnto the kynge and to the quene, and stryked hym forth in to the felde.

The wulf was ther redy and spack many a proud word. The rulers and kepars of the felde was the lupaert and the losse. They brought forth the booke, on whiche sware the wulf that the foxe was a traytour and a morderar, and none myght be falser than he was;

and that he wold preue on his body and make it good. Reynart the foxe sware that he lyed as a false knave and a cursyd theef, and that he wold doo good on his body. Whan this was don, the govenours of the felde bad them doo theyr deuoyr. Thenne romed they alle the felde, sauf Dame Rukenawe the she ape; she abode by the foxe, and bad hym remembre wel the wordes that she had sayd to hym. She said, See wel too; whan ye were vii. yer olde ye were wyse ynough to goo by nyght wythout lanterne, or mone shyne, where ye wyste to wynne ony goode. Ye ben named emong the peple wyse and subtyl, payne your self to werke soo that ye wynne the prys, thenne may ye have ever honour and worship, and al we that ben your frendys.

He answerd, My derest aunte, I knowe it wel. I shal doo my beste, and thynke on your counseyl. I hope so to doo that alle my lignage shal have worship therby, and myn enemyes shame and confusion. She sayde, God graunte it yow.

HOW THE FOXE AND THE WULF FOUGHTEN TO GYDRE.

CAPITULO XXXIX.

Therwyth she wente out of the felde, and let them tweyne goo to gydre. The wulf trade forth to the foxe in grete wrath, and opened his fore feet, and supposed to have taken the foxe in hem; but the foxe sprang fro hym lyghtly; for he was lyghter to fote than he. The wulf sprange after and hunted the foxe sore. Theyr frendes stode without the lystes and loked vpon hem.

The wulf strode wyder than Reynard dyde, and ofte overtoke hym, and lyfte vp his foot and wende to haue smyten hym, but the foxe sawe to, and smote hym wyth his rowhe tayle al in his visage. Tho wende the wulf to have ben plat blynde. Thenne muste he reste for to make clene his eyen.

Reyner thoughte on his fordele, and stode above the wynde skrabbing and casting wyth his feet the duste, that it flewe the wulfis eyen ful. The wulf was sore blynded therwyth, in suche wyse that he muste leve the rennyng after hym, for the sonde cleuyd vnder his eyen that it smarted so sore that he muste rubbe and wasshe it a way.

Tho cam Reyner in a grete angre, and bote hym thre grete woundes on his heed wyth his teeth, and said, What is that, syr wulf? hath one there byten yow? how is it wyth yow? I wyl al otherwyse on yow yet. Abyde I shal brynge yow somme newe thyng. Ye have stole many a lambe, and destroyed many a symple beest; and now falsely have appeled me and brought me in this trouble. Al this shal I now auenge on the. I am chosen to reward the for thyn old synnes, for good wyl no longer suffre the in thy grete rauyn and shrewdnes. I shal now assoylle the, and that shal be good for thy sowle. Take paciently this penaunce, for thou shalt lyue no lenger. The helle shal be thy purgatorye. Thy lyf is now in my mercy; but, and yf thou wilt knele down and aske me forgyfnes, and knowleche the to be overcomen; yet, though thou be evyl, yet I wyl spare the, for my con-

science counselleth me I shold not gladly slee no man.

Isegryn wende wyth thyse mockyng and spytous wordes to have goon out of his wytte ; and that dered hym so moche that he wyste not what to saye buff ne baff, he was so angry in his herte. The woundes that Reynart had given hym bledde, and smerted sore ; and he thought how he myghte best auenge it.

Wyth grete angre he lyft vp his foot and smote the foxe on the heed, so grete a stroke, that he fyl to the ground. Tho sterte the wulf to, and wende to have take hym ; but the foxe was lyght and wyly, and roose lyghtly vp and mette wyth hym fiersly, and there began a felle bataylle whiche dured longe. The wulf had grete spyte on the foxe, as it wel semed. He sprange after hym x times eche after other, and wold fayn have had hym faste, but his skyn was so slyper and fatte of the oyle, that alway he escaped fro hym. O! so subtyl and snelle was the foxe, that many tymes, whan the wulf wende wel to be sure of him, he sterte thenne bytwene his legges, and vndre his bely, and thenne torned he agayn and gaf the wulf a stroke wyth his tayl in his eyen, that Isegryn wende he shold haue loste his syght ; and this dyde he often tymes.

And alway, whan he had so smyten hym, thenne wold he goo aboue the wynde and reyse the duste, that it made his eyen ful of stufs.

Isegrym was wo begon, and thought he was at an afterdele. Yet was his strengthe and myght moche

more than the foxes. Reynard had many a sore stroke of hym whan he raught hym. The gaf eche other many a stroke and many a byte whan they sawe theyr auauntage ; and eche of hem dyde his best to destroye that other. I wold I myght see suche a bataylle : that one was wyly and that other was stronge ; that one faught wyth strengthe and that other wyth subtylte.

The wulf was angry that the foxe endured so longe ayenst hym. Yf his formest feet had ben hole the foxe had not endured so longe ; but the sores were so open that he myght not wel renne, and the foxe myght better of and on than he. And also he swange his tayl ofte vnder his eyen, and made hym that hym thoughte that his eyen shold goo out.

Atte laste he sayd to hym self, I wyl make an ende of this bataylle. How longe shal this caytyf dure thus ayenst me. I am so grete, I shold, yf I laye vpon hym, presse hym to deth. Hit is to me a grete shame that I spare hym so longe. Men shal mocke and poynte me wyth fyngres to my shame, and rebuke, for I am yet on the werst syde. I am sore wounded. I blede sore, and he drowneth me, and caste so moche dust and sande in myne eyen that hastely I shal not conne see. Yf I suffre hym ony longre, I wyl sette it in auenture, and seen what shal come therof.

Wyth that, he smote wyth his foot Reynard on the heed, that he fyll down to the ground ; and er he cowde aryse, he caught hym in his feet and laye vpon hym as he wold haue pressed hym to deth.

Tho began the foxe to be aferd, and so were alle

his frendis, whan they sawe hym lye vnder ; and on that other syde alle Ysegryms frendes were ioyeful and glad. The foxe defended hym faste wyth his clawes, as he laye vpward wyth his feet ; and gaf hym many a clope. The wulf durste not wyth his feet doo hym moche harme, but wyth his teeth snatched at hym as he wold have byten hym.

Whan the foxe sawe that he shold be byten, and was in grete drede, he smote the wulf in the heed wyth his formest clawes, and tare the skynne of bytwene his browes and hys eeris ; and that one of his eyen henge out ; whiche dyde him moche payne. He howlyd ; he wepte; he cryde lowde; and made a pyteous noyse; for the blode ranne down as it had ben a streme.

HOWE THE FOXE BEYNG VNDER THE WULF WYTH FLATERYNG WORDES GLOSED HYM, THAT THE FOXE CAM TO HIS ABOUE AGAYN.

CAPITULO XL.

The wulf wyped his eyen. The foxe was glad whan he sawe that. He wrastled so sore, that he sprang on his feet whyles he rubbed his eyen. The wulf was not wel plesyd therwyth alle ; and smote after hym er he escaped, and caught hym in his armes, and helde hym faste, notwythstandyng that he bledde.

Reynard was woo thenne. There wrastled they longe and sore. The wulf wexe so angry that he forgat al his smarte and payne, and threw the foxe al plat vnder hym, whiche cam hym euyl to passe ; for his one hand

by whiche he deffended hym sterte in the fallying in to Ysegryms throte, and thenne was he aferd to lese his hand.

The wulf sayd tho to the foxe, Now chese whether ye wyl yelde yow as ouercome, or ellis I shal certaynly slee yow, the skateryng of the dust, thy mockyng, ne thy deffence, ne alle thy false wylys, may not now helpe the; thou mayeste not escape me. Thou hast here to fore don me so moche harme and shame, and now I haue lost myne one eye, and therto sore wounded.

Whan Reynard herde that it stode so rowme, that he shold chese to knowleche hym ouercomen, and yelde hym, or ellis to take the deth, he thought the choys was worth ten marke, and that he muste saye that one, or that other, he had anon concluded what he wold saie, and began to saye to hym, wyth fayr wordes in this wyse: Dere eme, I wyl gladly become your man wyth alle my good, and I wyl goo for you to the holy graue, and shal gete pardon and wynnyng for your cloistre, of all the chyrches that ben in the Holy Lande, whiche shal moche prouffyte to your sowle, and your elders' sowles also. I trowe ther was neuer suche a prouffre prouffred to ony kynge. And I shal serue you lyke as I shold serue our holy fader the pope. I shal holde of you al that I haue, and euer ben your seruaunt, and forth I shal make that al my lignage shal do in lyke wyse. Thenne shal ye be a lorde aboue all lordes; who shold thenne dare doo ony thyng ayenst you? and furthermore, what someuer I take of polaylle, ghees, partrych, or plouyer, fysshe, or flesshe, or what someuer

it be, therof shal ye fyrst haue the choys, and your wyf, and your chyldren, er ony come in my body. Therto I wyl alway abyde by you, that where ye be ther shal no hurte ne scathe come to yow. Ye be strong, and I am wyly; late vs abyde to gydre, that one wyth the counseyl, and that other wyth the dede, then may ther nothyng mysfalle to us warde, and we ben so nygh of kynne eche to other, that of right shold be no angre bytwene vs. I wold not haue foughten ayenst you yf I myght haue escaped; but ye appeled me fyrst vnto fyghte; tho muste I doo, that I not doo wold gladly. And in this bataylle I haue ben curtoys to yow; I haue not yet shewde the utterist of my myght on yow, lyke as I wold haue doon yf ye had ben a straunger to me; for the neuew ought to spare the eme. It is good reson, and it ought so to bee. Dere eme, so haue I now doo, and that maye ye marke wel, whan I ran to fore yow; myn herte wold not consente therto, for I myght haue hurte yow moche more than I dyde, but I thought it neuer; for I haue not hurte you, ne don yow so moche harm that may hyndre yow, sauf only that myshappe that is fallen on your eye. Ach! therfore I am sory, and suffre moche sorrow in my herte. I wold wel, dere eme, that it had not happed yow, but that it had fallen on me, so that ye therwyth had ben plesyd; how be it that ye shal haue therby a grete auauntage, for whan ye here after shal slepe, ye nede not to shette but one wyndowe where another muste shette two. My wyf and my chyldren and my lignage shal falle doun to your feet, to fore the kynge, and to fore all them that ye wyl desyre, and praye yow humbly, that ye wyl suffre

Reynart, your neuew lyue, and also I shal knoweleche ofte to haue trespaced ayenst yow, and what lesynges I haue lyed vpon yow. How myght ony lord haue more honour than I proffre yow? I wold for no good do this to another; therfore I pray yow to be plesyd here wyth al.

I wote wel, yf ye wolde, ye myght now slee me, but and ye so don had, what had ye wonne. So muste ye euer after this tyme kepe yow fro my frendes and lignage. Therfore he is wyse that can, in his angre, mesure hym self, and not be ouer hasty; and to see wel what may falle or happe afterward to hym, what man that in his angre can wel aduyse hym, certaynly he is wyse. Men fynde many fooles that in hete hasten hem so moche, that after they repente hem, and thenne it is to late. But, dere eme, I trowe that ye be to wyse so to doo. Hit is better to haue prys, honour, reste, and pees, and many frendes that be redy to helpe hym, than to haue shame, hurte, vnreste, and also many enemyes lyeng in a wayte to doo hym harme. Also it is lityl worship to hym that hath ouercomen a man thenne to slee hym, it is a grete shame; not for my lyf, though I were deed, that were a lytyll hurte.

Isegrym the wulf said, Ay, theef, how fayn woldest thou be losed and dyscharged fro me, that here I wel by thy wordes. Were thou now fro me on thy free feet, thou woldest not sette by me an egge shelle. Though thou promysedest to me alle the world of fyn rede gold, I wold not late the escape. I sette lytyl by the, and alle thy frendes and lignage. Alle that thou

hast here said is but lesyngis and fayned falsenes; wenest thou thus to deceyue me. It is longe syth that I knewe the. I am no byrde to be locked ne take by chaf. I know wel ynowh good corn. O how woldest thou mocke me yf I lete the thus escape? thou myghtest wel haue said this to one that knewe the not, but to me, thou losest thy flateryng and swete floytyng, for I vnderstande to wel thy subtyl lyeng talys; thow hast so ofte deceyued me that me behoueth now to take good hede of the; thow false stynkyng knaue, thow saist that thou hast spared me in this batayl; loke hetherward to me, is not myn one eye out, and therto hast thou wounded me in xx. places in my heed; thou woldest not suffre me so longe to reste as to take ones my breeth. I were ouer moche a fool yf I shold now spare the, or be mercyful to the, so many a confusion and shame thou hast don to me; and that also that toucheth me most of alle, that thou hast disworshiped and sklaundred Erswyn, my wyf, whom I loue as wel as my self, and falsely deceyuedest her, whiche shal neuer out of my herte, for as ofte as it cometh to myn mynde, all myn angre and hate that I haue to the reneweth.

In the mene wylle that Ysegrym was thus spekyng, the foxe bithought hym how he myght helpe hym self, and stak his other hond after bytwene his legges, and grepe the wulf fast, and he wronge hem so sore that for woo and payne he muste crye lowde, and howle. Thenne the foxe drewe his other honde out of his mouth. The wulf had so moche payne and anguyssh of the sore wryngyng that the foxe dowed and wronge that he spytte blood.

HOW YSEGRYM THE WULF WAS OUERCOMEN, AND HOW THE BATAYL WAS TAKEN VP AND FYNYSSHED, AND HOW THE FOXE HAD THE WORSHIP.

CAPITULO XLJ.

This payne dyde hym more sorow and woo than his eye dyde, that so sore bledde, and also it made hym to ouerthrowe alle in a swowne, for he had so moche bledde, and also the threstyng that he suffred made hym so faynt, that he had lost his myght.

Thenne Reynard the foxe lepe vpon hym wyth al his myght, and caught hym by the legges, and drewe hym forth thurgh the felde, that they all myght see it, and he stack and smote hym sore.

Thenne were Ysegrym's frendes al ful of sorowe, and wente al wepyng vnto theyr lord the kynge, and prayde hym that he wold doo sece the batayll, and take it vp in to his handes.

The kynge graunted it, and thenne wente the kepars of the felde, the lupaerd and the lossem, and saide to the foxe, and to the wulf, Our lord, the kynge, wil speke wyth yow, and wyl that this batayl be ended; he wil take it in to his hand; he desyreth that ye wyl gyue your stryf vnto hym, for yf ony of yow here were slayn, it shold be grete shame on bothe sydes. For ye haue as moche worship of this felde as ye maye haue. And they sayde to the foxe, Alle the beestis gyue to yow the prys, that haue seen this bataylle.

The foxe said, Therof I thanke hem, and what that shal plese my lord to command, that shal I not gaynsaye. I desire no better, but to haue wonne the felde.

Late my frendes come hether to me, I wil take aduyse of them what I shal doo.

They saide, That they thought it good: and also it was reson in weyghty matters, a man shold take aduys of his frendis.

Thenne came dame Slopecade and Grymbert the dasse, her husband; dame Rukenawe wyth her ii susters; Byteluys and Fulrompe, her two sons, and Hatenet her doughter; the flyndermows, and the wezel. And ther cam moo than xx, whiche would not have comen yf the foxe had lest the feeld. So who that wynneth and cometh to hys aboue, he getteth grete loos and worship; and who that is overthrowen and hath the werse, to hym wil no man gladly come. Ther cam also to the foxe, the beuer, the otter, and bothe theyr wyues Panthecrote and Ordegale; and the ostrole, the martre, the fychews, the fyret, the mowse, and the squyrel, and many moo than I can name; and alle bycause he had wonne the feeld. Ye some that to fore had complayned on hym, and were now of his next kynne, and they shewde hym right frendly chier and contenance. Thus fareth the world now: Who that is riche and high on the wheel, he hath many kynnesmen and frendes that shal helpe to bere out his welthe. But who that is nedy and in payne, or in poverte, fyndeth but few frendes and kynnesmen; for every man almost esheweth his companye and waye.

There was thenne grete feste: they blewe up trompettis and pyped wyth shalmoyses. They sayden alle, Dere neuew, blessyd be God that ye haue sped

wel. We were in grete drede and fere whan we saw yow lye vnder.

Reynart the foxe thanked alle them frendly, and resceyued them with grete joye and gladnes. Thenne he asked of them, what they counsseylled hym ; yf he sholde gyue the felde vnto the kynge or no. Dame Slopecade sayde, Ye hardely cosyn. Ye may wyth worship wel sette it in to his handes, and truste hym wel ynough.

Tho wente they alle wyth the kepars of the felde vnto the kynge, and Reynard the foxe wente to fore them alle wyth trompes and pypes, and moche other mynstralcye. The foxe kneled down to fore the kynge. The kynge bad hym stand vp, and said to hym, Reynard ye be now joyeful. Ye have kepte your day worshipfully. I discharge yow, and late yow goo freely quyte where it plesyth yow. And the debate bytwene yow I holde it on me, and shal discusse it by reson and by counseyl of noble men, and wil ordeyne therof that ought be doon by reson, at suche tyme as Ysegrym shal be hool. And thenne I shal sende for yow to come to me ; and thenne, by Goddes grace, I shal yeue out the sentence and jugement.

AN ENSAMPLE THAT THE FOXE TOLDE TO THE KYNGE WHAN HE HAD WONNE THE FELDE.

CAPITULO XLIJ.

My worthy and dere lord, the kynge, saide the foxe, I am wel agreed and payd therwyth. But whan I

cam fyrst in your court, ther were many that were felle and enuyous to me, whiche never had hurte ne cause of scathe by me, but they thought that they myght beste over me. And alle they cryden wyth myn enemyes ayenst me, and wold fayn haue destroyed me, by cause they thought that the wulf was better withholden and gretter wyth you than I was, whiche am your humble subget. They knewe none other thynge why ne wherfore. They thoughte not as the wyse be woned to doo, that is what the end may happen. My lorde, thyse ben lyke a grete heep of houndes whiche I ones saw stonde at a lordes place vpon a donghil, where as they awayted that men sholde brynge them mete. Thenne sawe they an hound come out of the kychen, and had taken there a fayr rybbe of beef er it was gyuen hym, and he ran fast away wyth all. But the cook had espyed or he wente away, and took a grete bolle ful of scaldyng water and caste it on his hyppes behynde; wherof he thankyd nothyng the cook, for the heer behynde was skalded of, and his skyn semed as it had be thurgh soden. Nevertheles he escaped away, and kepte that he had wonne. And whan his felaws, the other houndes, saw hym come wyth this fayr rybbe, they called hym alle, and saide to hym, O, how good a frende is the cook to the, whiche hath gyuen to the so good a boone wheron his so moche flessh. The hound saide, Ye knowe nothyng therof; ye preyse me lyke as ye see me to fore wyth this bone, but ye haue not seen me behynde. Take hede and beholde me afterward on myne buttokkis, and thenne ye shal knowe how I haue deseruyd it.

And whan they had seen hym behynde on his hyppes, how that his skynne and his flessh was al rawe and thurgh soden ; tho growled them alle, and were aferd of that syedyng water, and wold not of his felawship, but fledde and ran away from hym, and lete hym there allone. See, my lord, this right haue thyse false beestis, whan they be made lordes and may gete their desire, and whan they be myghty and doubted, thenne ben they extorcionners and scatte and pylle the peple, and eten them lyke as they were forhongred houndes. These ben they that bere the bone in her mouth. No man dar haue to doo wyth hem, but preyse alle that they bedryve. No man dar saye other wyse, but suche as shal plese hem by cause they wold not be shorn ; and somme helpe them forth in theyr vnryghtwys dedes by cause they wold haue parte, and lykke theyr fyngres, and strengthe them in theyr euyl lyf and werkis. O, dere lord, how lytyl seen they that do thus after behynde them what the ende shal be. Atte laste they fal fro hye to lowe in grete shame and sorowe, and thenne theyr werkis come to knowleche, and be opene in suche wyse that no man hath pyte ne compasion on them in theyr meschief and trouble ; and every man curse them, and saye euyl by them to their shame and vylanye.

Many of suche haue ben blamed and shorn ful nyghe that they had no worship ne prouffyt, but lose theyr heer as the hound dyde ; that is, theyr frendes, whiche haue holpe them to couere their mysdedes and extorcions, like as the heer couerythe the skyn. And whan they

haue sorow and shame for theyr olde trespaces, thenne eche body pluckyth his hand fro hym, and flee, lyke as the houndes dyde fro hym that was scalded wyth the syedyng water, and lete hym thyse extorcions in her sorow and nede.

My dere lorde the kynge, I beseche you to remembre the example of me, it shal not be ayenst your worship ne wysedom. What wene ye how many ben ther suche false extorcionners, now in these dayes, ye much werse than an hound, that bereth suche a bone in his mouth, in townes, in grete lordes courtes, whiche wyth greet facing and bracyng oppresse the poure peple wyth grete wronge, and selle theyr fredom and pryuelages; and bere them on hond of thyngis that they neuer knewe, ne thoughte. And all for to gete good for theyr synguler proffyt, God giue them all shame and soone destroy them, who somme euer they be that so doo.

But God be thanked, said the foxe, ther may no man endwyte me, ne my lygnage, ne kynne, of suche werkys, but that we shal acquyte vs, and comen in the lyghte. I am not aferd of ony, that can saye on me ony thyng that I haue don otherwyse than a trewe man ought to doo. Alle way the foxe shal a byde the foxe, though alle his enemyes hadde sworn the contrarye. My dere lord the kynge, I loue you wyth my herte aboue alle other lordes. And neuer for noman wold I torne fro yow; but abyde by yow to the utterist; how wel it hath ben otherwyse enformed your hyenes: I haue neuertheles alway do the best, and forth so wylle doo alle my lyf, that I can or may.

HOW THE KYNG FORGAF THE FOXE ALLE THYNGIS, AND MADE HYM SOUERAYN AND GRETTEST OUER AL HIS LANDES.

CAPITULO XLIIJ.

THE kynge sayde, Reynard, ye be one of them that oweth me homage, whiche I wyl that ye allway so doo. And also I wylle that erly and late ye be of my counseyl, and one of my justyses. See wel to that ye not mysdoo, ne trespace no more. I sete yow agayn in alle your myght and power, lyke as ye were to fore, and see that ye further alle matters to the beste righte, for whan ye sette your wytte and counseyl to vertue and goodnesse, thenne may not our court be wythout your aduyse and counseyl, for here is non that is lyke to yow in sharp and hye counseyll, ne subtyller in fyndyng a remedye for a meschief. And thynke ye on thexample that ye yourself haue tolde; and that ye haunte rightwysnes, and be to me trewe. I will fro hensforth werke and doo by your aduyse and counseyll; he lyueth not that yf he mysdede yow, but I shold sharply aduenge and wreke it on hym. Ye shall ouer-alle speke and saye my wordes, and in alle my lande shall ye be, aboue alle other souerayne, and my bayle; that offyce I gyue yow: ye may wel occupye it wyth worship.

Alle Reynardis frendis and lignage thanketh the kynge heyly. The kynge sayde, I wolde doo more for your sake than ye wene; I praye yow alle that ye remembre hym that he be trewe.

Dame Rukenawe thenne sayd, Yes sykerly, my lord, that shal he euer be. And thynke ye not the contrary; for yf he were otherwyse, he were not of our kynne ne lignage, and I wold euer myssake hym, and wold ever hyndre hym to my power.

Reynart the foxe thanked the kynge with fayr curtoys wordes, and sayd, Dere lorde, I am not worthy to haue the wership that ye doo to me; I shal thynke theron, and be trewe to you also longe as I lyue, and shal gyue you as holsom counseyl as shal be expedient to your good grace. Here wyth he departed wyth his frendes fro the kynge.

Now herke how Isegrym the wulf dyde. Bruyn the bere, Thybert the catte, and Erswynde and her chyldren, wyth their lignage, drewen the wulf out of the felde, and leyde hym vpon a lyter of heye, and couerd hym warm, and loked to his woundes, which were wel xxv.; and ther cam wyse maistres and surgyens, whiche bonde them, and weeshe hem. He was so seke and feble, that he had lost his ſelynge; but they rubbed and wryued hym vnder his temples and eyen, that he sprange out of his swoune and cryde so lowde, that alle they were aferde: they had wende that he had been wood.

But the maistres gaf hym a drynke that comforted his herte, and made hym to slepe. They comforted hys wyf, and tolde to her that ther was no deth wounde, ne paryl of his lyf. Thenne the court brake vp, and the beestis departed to theyr places and homes that they cam froo.

HOW THE FOXE WYTH HIS FRENDIS AND LIGNAGE DEPARTED NOBLY FRO THE KYNGE, AND WENTE TO HIS CASTEL MALLEPERDUYS.

CAPITULO XLIIJ.

Reynart the foxe toke his leue honestly of the kynge and of the quene, and they bad hym he shold not tarye longe, but shortly retorne to them agayn. He answerd and said, Dere kynge and quene, alway at your commandement I shal be redy. Yf ye nede ony thynge, whiche God forbede, I wold alway be redy wyth my body, and my good to helpe yow, and also al my frendes and lignage in lyke wyse shal obeye your commandement and desire. Ye haue hyely deseruyd it, God quyte it yow and yeue you grace longe to lyue; and I desyre your lycence and leue to goo home to my wyf and chyldren; and yf your good grace wil ony thyng, late me haue knowleche of it, and ye shal fynde me alway redy. Thus departed the foxe wyth fayr wordes fro the kynge.

Now who that coude sette hym in Reynardis crafte, and coude behaue hym in flateryng and lyenge, as he dyde, he shold, I trowe, be herde, both wyth the lordes spyrytuel and temporel. Ther ben many, and also the moste parte that crepe after his waye and his hole. The name that was gyuen to hym abydeth alway stylle wyth hym. He hath lefte many of his crafte in this world, whiche alwaye wexe and become myghty, for who that wyl not vse Reynardis crafte now, is nought

worth in the world now in ony estate that is of myght. But yf he can crepe in Reynardis nette, and hath ben his scoler, thenne may ye dwelle with vs. For thenne knoweth he wel the way how he may aryse, and is sette vp aboue of euery man.

Ther is in the world moche seed left of the foxe, whiche now oueral groweth and cometh sore vp; though they haue no rede berdes, yet ther ben founden mo foxes now than euer were here to fore. The rightwys people ben al loste, trouthe and rightwysnes ben exyled, and fordriuen, and for them ben abyden wyth vs couetyse, falshede, hate, and enuye. Thyse regne now moche in euery contre, for is it in the popes court, the emperours, the kynges, dukes, or ony other lordes where some euer it be, eche man laboureth to put other out fro his worship, offyce, and power, for to make hym sylf to clymme hye with lyes, wyth flateryng, wyth symonye, wyth money, or wyth strengthe and force.

Ther is none thyng byloued ne knowen in the court now a days but money; the money is better byloued than God, for men doo moche more therfore; for who someuer bryngeth money shal be wel receyuyd, and shal haue alle his desyre, is it of lordes or of ladyes, or ony other. That money doth moche harme. Money bryngeth many in shame and drede of his lyf, and bryngeth false wytnes ayenst true peple for to gete money. Hit causeth vnclennes of lyuyng, lyeng, and lecherye.

Now clerkes goon to Rome, to Parys, and to many another place, for to lerne Reynardis crafte. Is he clerke, is he laye man, eueriche of them tredeth in the

foxes path, and seketh his hole. The world is of suche condycion now, that euery man seketh hym self in alle maters. I wote not what ende shal come to vs herof. All wyse men may sorowe wel herfore, I fere that for the grete falsenes, thefte, robberye, and murdre, that is now vsed so moche and comonly, and also the vnshamfast lecherye and avoultry bosted and blowen a brood with the auauntyng of the same, that wythout grete repentaunce, and penaunce therfore, that God will take vengeaunce and punyshe vs sore therfore; whom I humbly beseche, and to whom nothyng is hyd, that he wylle gyue vs grace to make amendes to hym therfore, and that we maye rewle vs to his playsyr.

And herwyth wil I leue: for what haue I to wryte of thise mysdedis? I haue ynowh to doo with myn owne self, and so it were better that I helde my pees, and suffre; and the beste that I can doo for to amende my self now in this tyme, and so I counseyle euery man to doo here in this present lyf, and that shal be moste our prouffyt. For after this lyf cometh no tyme that we may occupye to our auantage for to amende vs, for thenne shal euery man answere for hym self, and bere his owen burthen.

Reynardis frendes and lignage to the nombre of xl., haue taken also theyr leue of the kynge, and wente alle to gydre wyth the foxe, whiche was right glad that he had so wel sped, and that he stode so wel in the kynges grace. He thought that he had no shame, but that he was so grete with the kyng, that he myght helpe and further his frendes, and hyndre his enemyes,

and also to doo what he wolde, wythout he shold be blamed yf he wold be wyse.

The foxe and his frendis wente so longe to gydre that they camen to his burgh to Maleperduys; ther they alle toke leue, eche of other, wyth fayr and courtoys wordes. Reynard dyde to them grete reuerence, and thanked them alle frendly, of theyr good fayth, and also worship, that they had don and shewd to hym, and profred to eche of them his seruyse yf they had nede, wyth body and goodes. And herwyth they departed, and eche of them wente to theyr owne howses.

The foxe wente to dame Ermelyn his wyf, whiche welcomed hym frendly: he tolde to her and to his chyldren, alle the wonder that to hym was befallen in the court; and forgote not a worde, but tolde to them euery dele, how he had escaped. Thenne were they glad that theyr fader was so enhaunsed and grete wyth the kynge. And the foxe lyued forthon wyth his wyf and chyldren in grete joye and gladnes.

Now, who that said to yow of the foxe, more or lesse, than ye haue herd or red, I holde it for lesynge. But this that ye haue herd or red, that may ye beleue wel; and who that byleueth it not, is not therfore out of the right beleue. How be it, ther be many, yf that they had seen it, they shold haue the lesse doubte of it. For ther ben many thinges in the world whiche ben byleued though they were neuer seen; also ther ben many fygures, playes founden, that neuer were don ne happed, but for an example to the peple, that they may therby the better vse and folowe vertue, and teschewe

synne and vyces. In lyke wyse may it be by this booke: that who that wyl rede this mater, though it be of iapes and bourdes, yet he may fynde therin many a good wysedom, and lernynges; by whiche he may come to vertue and worship. Ther is no good man blamed herin; hit is spoken generally. Late euery man take his owne part as it belongeth and behoveth, and he that fyndeth hym gylty in ony dele or part therof, late hym bettre and amende hym. And he that is good, veryly I pray God kepe hym therin. And yf ony thyng be said or wreton herin, that may greue or dysplease ony man; blame not me; but the foxe. For they be his wordes and not myne.

Prayeng alle them that shal see this lytyl treatis, to correcte and amende, where they shal fynde faute; for I haue not added ne mynusshed, but haue folowed as nyghe as I can, my copye, whiche was in dutche, and by me William Caxton translated in to this rude and symple Englyssh, in thabbey of Westmestre. Fynysshed the vj daye of juyn the yere of our lord M.CCCC.LXXXJ and the xxj yere of the regne of kynge Edward the iiijth.

HERE ENDETH THE HISTORYE OF
REYNARD THE FOXE.

NOTES.

P. 2, *Open Court.*—This open court, the "Cour Plénière of the French, is very characteristically summoned at Whitsuntide; such assemblings of the feudatory nobles at the court of their sovereign during the middle ages, being customarily held upon the three great festivals of the Church.—*See* Ducange, s. v. *Curia.*

P. 3, *Bespattered.*—The words in the Dutch prose are "end daer beseykede hi mijn kinderen daer si laghen," &c.

Ibid. Holy Sayntes.—In the original "die heeligen" by which is meant, not "the book with the Sayntes" which Caxton introduces a few lines after, and of which no mention is made in the Dutch prose, but the relics of saints, a form of adjuration which was anciently of frequent occurrence, and regarded as of the most solemn and binding nature. The reader will call to mind the circumstance of William having concealed the "holy sayntes" beneath the altar at which Harold swore fidelity to him, see Lappenberg, i. 527. That, in this case, relics are alluded to, is shown by the following verses from the *Reinardus.*

"Aut ut præjures pignora sacra super,"—lib. iv. 486.

and—

"Quis mihi reliquias afferet? æqua velim."—iv. 508."

See further upon this point Grimm's Deutsche Rechts-Altherthümer, s. 896.

P. 5, *Grymbart the Dasse.*—The dasse is the badger, from

the Dutch *Das*, and German *Dachs*. In the English edition of 1650, &c. he is called "the Brock."

Ibid. Myn Eme.—Though Grimbart here calls Reynart his 'Eme' or uncle, the word which we have from the Anglo-Saxon *Eam*, and is the same with the German *Oheim*, Low German *Om*, and Frisian *Em*, originally signified the mother's brother *(avunculus)*, but afterwards was applied in the sense of father's brother *(patruus)*, and eventually became a complimentary epithet, bestowed without regard to the relationship of the parties.

P. 6, *The grate or bones.*—Grate is the Flemish *Graet*, German *Grate*, a fish bone. The fish Thornback is called by the Dutch *Griet*, from its spinous appendages.

Ibid. By cause of his wife.—The passage which follows is thus given in the Dutch prose: "Mijn oeme heft se germint, Iae dat is wel seveniaer gheleden eer dat hy se trouwede. Of dan Reynaert daer doer minne en houescheit sinen wille did. Wat wast dan. Si was daer schier of genesen."

P. 7, *The Menowr.*—A thief is said to be taken *with the Mainour*, when he is taken with the thing stolen upon him *in manu*. And Blackstone furnishes an illustration of the accuracy with which the Badger lays down the law, when he adds (book iv. c. 23), that "by the Danish law he might be taken and hanged upon the spot, without accusation or trial."

P. 7, *What skathed it him.*—What harmed it him; from the Anglo Saxon *scethan*, to injure, hurt, &c.

Ibid. Bylded a cluse.—A cluse is a cell, from the Latin *clusa*, see Ducange; and in the next chapter (p. 9) we hear that Reynard was "a cloysterer, or closyd recluse, becomen."

P. 9, *Slavyne and pylche.*—The "slavyne" is the robe worn by pilgrims, see Ducange, s. v. *Sclavina*, who says, quoting, ex Chronico Andiensi; *Pedes incedens in habitu peregrini qui vulgo dicitur Sclavina.*

The pylche, from the Anglo-Saxon *pylca*, is a garment of skin, with the hair, or fur garment. The term "pilch" is still retained in our nurseries for a flannel wrapper.

Ibid. Forthon.—Indeed; from the *Anglo-Saxon furthon.*

P. 10, *Sexte, None, and Evensong.*—Three of the seven canonical hours of the Romish Church, to each of which proper services were assigned.

Ibid. Bytake.—Commend; from the Anglo-Saxon, *betæcan*.

Ibid. Forslongen.—Swallowed up, devoured. From the Dutch *Verslinden*, German *Verschlingen*, to devour. Thus in Luther's German Bible, 2 Sam. xx. 19, "Warum willst du das Erbtheil des Herrn *verschlingen*." "Why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?"

Ibid. Abye.—Make amends for, atone, so in Piers Ploughman.

> The commune for theyr unkyndenes,
> I drede me, shul abye."—l. 5336-7. ed. Wright.

P. 10, *We will give to her the dethes rights.*—It was not unreasonable to hope that this passage would have furnished some illustration of Shakspere's 'Virgin crants,' an expression which has excited so much comment. In the metrical Dutch version, we have the very words of Caxton, "Daer willen wy eens doden recht me plegen."

P. 11, *Placebo.*—At the service of the dead, after the verse *Requiem æternam, &c. Placebo Domino in regione vivorum* is sung.

Ibid. When this *Vigilie* was done and the *commendacion.*

The office for the dead in the Romish Church was sometimes so designated, see Ducange in v. *Vigiliæ.*

Commendatio, prayers or office for the dead, so entitled, says Ducange (l. v.) quoting the statutes of the order of Sempringham, "quia in eo fit commendatio animæ defuncti a sacerdote."

P. 13. *Richest of leevys and of land.*—This is obviously one of those alliterative formulæ, of which so many have been preserved in legal technicology, as "might and main," "life and limb," "part and parcel," &c. It is here used to express a person of wealth and consideration, as is obvious from the original Dutch prose, in which the Fox describes the Bear as being "die edelste en die meeste van loue van alde lande."

Ibid. Lyef neve.—Lyef, dear, from the Anglo-Saxon *Leof.*

P. 14. *The rede Reynard.*—Rede is red: so in the metrical *Reinarts* "Ist u eernst, sprac die rode."

P. 14. *Vii hamber barelis.*—Probably seven wine barrels, see Ducange, s. v. *Ama*, *Hama*, and *Hamellicus*. The Dutch prose says, "seuen aemen hebben," and the metrical *Reinart.*

"Al wildijs hebben vii amen,"—line 619.

Ame is explained by Killian "Cadus Hama," and in French *Caque.*

Ibid. Yonste.—Favour and affection, from the Dutch *gunste.*

Ibid. Two betels.—Betels, here and in the following page, is used in the sense of wedge; and in the copy of Caxton's Reynard, in the King's Library, British Museum, the word "Betels" has been struck out with a pen, and the word "wegge" written over it, in an old, apparently a contemporary, hand.

P. 17. *Bleef.*—Remained, from the Anglo-Saxon *belæfde*, the perfect of the verb *belifan.*

P. 18. *Grete leden wapper.*—What precise instrument is meant by the "grooten loden wappere," as it is called in Caxton's original, is by no means clear. Killian defines *wapper* as Flagellum; and again, *wapper*, *loyenkloot*, as Plumbata, martiobarbulus, pila plumbea, missilis, Plombée, boule de plombe attachée a une corde pour la jeter, et retirer ayant assené son coup.

Ibid. Forslynedge.—Smote or beat.

Ibid. A croked staf, well leded, &c.—Probably such a staff as is now used in playing Golf.

Ibid. Macob, the stoppel-maker.—A maker of stoppels or stoops, see Killian, s. v. *Stoppel*, *Stoope*, &c. In the Low German *Reineke Vos*, we find,—

"It were de *stoppelmeter*," which Hoffmann explains in his Glossary, Stubble-meter, used ironically for Tithe-collector.

Ibid. Hym lusted.—It pleased him. This impersonal verb is frequently used by Chaucer, see Tyrwhitt's Glossary, s. v. Leste.

P. 20. *Such good venison.*—From this use of the word "Venison," it would seem that it was formerly applied, not to the flesh of deer only, but to that of any other animal taken by the chase, and used as an article of food.

Ibid, Dieu vous garde.—Caxton has not transferred this sentence into his English version, but altered it in a way which shows his knowledge of the French language. The metrical *Reinart* says,

"Sire Priester, dieu vo saut!"

The Dutch prose from which Caxton translated "Chyre priester, dieux vos faut."

Ibid, The felle diere.—The fell beast, from the Dutch *Diera*, and German *Thier*.

P. 21. *To rutsele.*—To slip or slide, from the Dutch *rutsen* or *rotsen*.

Ibid. He wentled.—He turned or rolled over, from the old Dutch *wentelen* or *wendtelen*, see Killian. So again, page 28, the Cat is described as "rolling and *wentlyng* towards the kyng's court."

Ibid. Not well payd.—Not well pleased. So Chaucer, in the Wife of Bath's Tale:

"Who so that halt him paid of his poverte,
I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte."

In Piers Ploughman, as in the present work (see page 26, &c.), the word occurs again, under the form *a-payed:*

"Therwith was Perkyn a-payed."—
Piers Ploughman, l. 4012. *ed. Wright.*

P. 22. "*And dayed*," "*and be dayed*;" from the Flemish and Low German *dagen*, to be summoned for a certain day, or have a day appointed, see Hoffmann's *Reineke*, v. 902; Willem's *Reinart*, v. 1007.

This explanation is confirmed by the passage in page 28, where Grymbart claims for the Fox that he shall "be don to as to a free man, whan he shall be judged, he muste be warned the thirde tyme for al."

P. 23. "*One of Seynt Martyn's byrdes.*"—Dreyer, in his Essay on Reynard, *Nebenstunden*, s. 108, and Grimm, in his Reinhart Fuchs, suppose the crow, Virgil's "sinistra cornix," the "corneia sinistra" of the Poema del Cid, to be the bird alluded to; and the superstition connected with such a bird, is mentioned by Peter of Blois, epist. 65. "Si a sinistra in dexteram avis Sancti Martini volaverit." Others have supposed the Goose to be the bird alluded to, whose connexion with the anniversary of St. Martin, is shown by the following lines from the old German comic romance of Peter Leu:

"Hinnum bis auf S. Martin's Tag
Als da man die Gäns-Feste pflag."
V. der Hagen's *Narrenbuch, s.* 391.

And in Douce's Illustrations of Shakspere, ii. 345, there is a story quoted from Odo de Ceriton, in which mention is made of a kind of wren named after St. Martin, with very long and slender legs.

Ibid. Unhappe.—Misfortune. In the Dutch prose, from which Caxton translated, the word is *onghelucke.*

P. 25. *Flawnes.*—In this instance, pancakes are probably intended. "Of milke and of egges men make flawnes," says Caxton, in the Boke for Travellers, see further Mr. Way's Promptorium Parvulorum, p. 164, n. 3, where the reader will

find an abundance of illustrations of the several meanings attached to this word.

Ibid. Line 15.—It is plain, from an examination of the Dutch prose, that this passage should be printed, " Tybert, quod the Foxe, I will bring yow to the place, er I goo from yow. Reyner, quod the *Catte*, upon your sauf conduijt, I wolde wel goo wyth you to Monpelier !"

Ibid. Gryn.—A trap or snare. So in the Anglo-Saxon Gospel, Luke xxi. 35, we read, *Swa swa gryn*, as a snare.

P. 26. *Wrawen.*—To call out, from the Dutch *wrauwen*. In the Dutch prose it is *wrauwen*; in the metrical Reinart, *roepen.*

Ibid. Al moder naked.—This expressive substitute for the more common phrase " naked as he was born," Caxton has copied from his original, when it is said " Die paep selve liep al moder naect." The incident affords a striking proof how universally the custom of so sleeping prevailed during the Middle Ages,—a custom which is curiously illustrated by the Fabliau of *Le Boucher d'Abbeville*, and still more so by the *very French* engraving of that subject, which appears in the frontispiece to the fourth volume of Méon's edition of Barbazan's Fabliaux et Contes.

Ibid. Locken his wyf.—This error in the name of the priest's wife, whose name was Dame Julocke, as we have it in the next page, is not Caxton's. The author of the Dutch prose calls her Locken in this place. To show how slight have been the alterations, how few the omissions, made in the text of this edition, we take this opportunity of giving the original of a passage, which has necessarily been more modified than any other in the book.

" Die naecte paep hief op en soude enen groten slach slaen, en Tybert sach wel dat hi ymmer sterven moeste, daer vermande hi hem, en voer den pape tuschen sine beenen mitten

clauwen en mitten tanden, also dat hi hen sinen rechteren cul of haelde. Desen spronck bequam den paep so qualiken ende tot groten scaden.

" Dit dinc viel neder op die vloer, vrouwe Julocke dit vernam ende swoer groflick hoers vaders fiele, si woude dattet hoer ghecost waer die offerhande van enen heelen iaer dat den paep die scade die scande ende die leemte niet gheschiet en waer, ende sprach, In des duuels name wort die strick hier ye ghesettet. Sich mertinet, leue soen, dits van dijns vaders ghewade, dat as een alten groten scande ende mi alte grote scade, al genase hi hier van so is noch van mi verderft ende ewelic des soeten speels ommachtich. Reynert stant buten voer dat gat, ende hoerde alle die woerden, ende lachte also uterwaten sere dz hi nauwe ghestaen en coude. Hi sprac aldus in schimpe, vrouwe Julocke schwiget al stille ende laet uwen groten rouwe sincken. Al heeft u here sinen cul verloren, ten scaet hem met als hi u anders van bachten dienen wille, hi sal u nochtans wel gheriuen. Menighe capellen sijn oeck in die wereldt daerinen niet dan mit eenre clocken en luydt."

P. 27. *Unnethe.*—Scarcely, from the Anglo-Saxon *un-eathe.*

P. 31. *Vytayller.*—Purveyor.

Ibid. He that sorowed.—He that cared or provided for.

P. 32. *Spynde.*—A pantry or larder, from the Dutch *spinde.*

P. 33. *Slepid.*—Dragged, from the Flemish *sleypen*, to drag.

P. 34. *Faldore*, and again, *valdore.*—A trap-door or folding-door, from the Flemish *valdeure* or *vald-deure.*

Ibid. Ye borde and jape with me.—You joke and jest with me. Borde, from the Anglo-Norman, or more probably from the old Friesic *Bord*, a jest; and jape, to mock, from the Norman-French *Gaber*, and not, I think, from the Anglo-Saxon, as has frequently been stated. The words are frequently found in connexion, as in Chaucer's Manciple's Prologue:

" That that I spake, I said it in my *bourd.*
And wete ye what? I have here in my gourd

A draught of win, ye of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good *jape*."

And in Palsgrave, where we find: "To bourde or jape with one in sport." "*Truffler, border, jouncher;*" see further Mr. Way's valuable illustrations of both these words, in his edition of the Promptorium Parvulorum, pp. 44 and 257.

P. 34. *Bydryven.*—From the Flemish *Bedryven*, malum committere, see Killian.

P. 35. *Polayle, polaylle, polayll, poleyl*—for the word occurs in all these forms, within the space of two pages—is here used in the sense of poultry, or domestic fowls; from the French *Poulaille.*

P. 39. *Romed the court.*—Departed from the court; from the anglo-Saxon *Rumian*, and Danish *Roemme.* In page 81, we have "ruymed his castle."

P. 40. *Balked.*—Was angry, from the Flemish *belgen*, in past tense *balch*, to be angry.

P. 41. *Ferners*,—past events. This word occurs in Piers Ploughman, used adverbially, line 3354, and as a substantive in the following passage:

"And many times have meved the
To thynke on thyn ende,
And how fele *fernyeres* are faren," &c.
l. 7440. *et seq. ed. Wright.*

In Gualtier's edition, the word "tyme" is substituted.

P. 44. *Gheet.*—Goats, from the Anglo-Saxon *Gæt*, a goat.

Ibid. Grymmed.—Raged, from the Anglo-Saxon *grimman*, to rage.

Ibid. Scatte.—In this instance *scatte*, which is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *sceat*, is used in the sense of treasure. It sometimes means money only; and certain Anglo-Saxon coins were expressly denominated *sceattas.* It is also frequently used to signify a tax or tribute; and in this latter sense is a

household word at the present day, under the modernized form of "*scot*," as in scot and lot, scot-free, &c.

P. 46. *Unberisped.*—This word, which Gualtier in his edition has changed into openly, is here used in the sense of harmless, undisturbed, and is the same as the old Flemish *onberispt*, harmless, see Killian; or rather, as the *unbirepped*, *unberepped*, untouched, undisturbed, of the old Friesic law, see Richthofer. See note on *Beryspe*, p. 136.

Ibid. Kyng Ermeryks tresour.—The reader who desires better acquaintance with this treasure, which is so frequently referred to in the German poems of the Middle Ages, as the Nibelungen, &c. and is intimately connected with the northern and Gothic traditional cycles, is referred to Mr. Kemble's edition of *Beowulf*, vol. i. p. 261, and to the note on line 2396 in vol. ii.; or for yet fuller particulars, to W. Grimm's *Deutsche Heldensage*, *s.* 17, 46, *&c.*

P. 47. *Sworen upon Ysegrym's crowne.*—Willems, in his *Reinaert*, p. 92, explains this passage, by a reference to Isegrim's having entered the cloister of Elmare and become a monk, and to the practice which formerly obtained, when a priest never took an oath, but when he gave evidence laid his right hand upon his crown or tonsure, and in that way testified to the truth of his statement.

Ibid. The stole at Acon.—Acon is Aix la Chapelle, or, as it is called in German, Aachen. "The stole" is the celebrated throne or coronation chair of white marble, covered with plates of gold, on which no less than fifty-five crowned emperors had been seated previously to the year 1558, see Nolten's *Archaologische Beschreibung des Munster oder Kronungskirche zu Aachen.*

Ibid. Fordryve.—Chaucer uses this word in his Romaunt of the Rose:

> "When they in ease wene best to live
> They ben with tempest all *fordrive*."—*l.* 3781,2.

Gaultier in his edition has altered the sentence, and reads "shoulde chace him away."

Ibid. "*The holy thre Kings of Collyn*,"—The Three Kings of Cologne, the patrons of that city, are the Three Wise Men, whose bodies were brought to Constantinople by the Empress Helena, about the year 328, thence transferred to Milan, and afterwards, in 1164, when Milan was taken by the Emperor Frederick, presented by him to the Archbishop of Cologne. In Fosbroke's *British Monachism* is an account, drawn from Du Cange, of the Feast of the Star, or Office of the Three Kings; and in Hoffman's *Horæ Belgicæ*, ii. 69, the song sung by the Star-Singers, the actors in a popular ceremony observed in Germany on the Feast of the Epiphany, until the close of the last century.

P. 48. *Frosshis*—Frogs. See Mr. Way's observations on this form of the word in his edition of the Promptorium, p. 180. n. 3.

Ibid. bydwongen—"Kept under" is the expression substituted by Gualtier in his edition—which corresponds very closely with the original Flemish word, bedwongen, which Killian defines "Coactus, Adactus, Contraint." The word occurs again in a somewhat different form at p. 66, where we read "a bydwogen oth, or oth sworn by force."

P. 49. *Foot spore*—foot-mark, the *voet-spoere*, Vestigium pedis, of Killian. It occurs again at p. 86.

P. 50. *Souldye or wages.*—Pay, or wages, from the French *Soulde, souldée*, see Roquefort. We see very clearly from this, and the word "Souldyour," which occurs a few lines lower down, the strict meaning of the name souldiers, that is, hired troops.

P. 52. *Stoundmele*—a little while. Caxton appears to have misunderstood the original passage, which says,—The foxe saw that the king was *deceived*,—and translated the Dutch

obelopen stoundmele, which Gualtier not understanding, altered in his edition of 1555, into "sadly."

Ibid. The king toke up a straw fro the ground.—This, and the passage in the following page, where the fox takes up a straw, and proffers it to the king, contain allusions to one of the most ancient symbolical forms which exist in the early laws of the Roman and Germanic nations: and the lawyer who speaks of agreements and *stipulations*, little thinks how much of legal archæology is involved in the latter word. But the subject would require a book instead of a note, so I will refer the reader desirous of investigating this curious point, to Grimm's *Deutsche Rechts-altherthümer*, s. 121, et seq., or Michelet, *Origines du Droit Français*, p. 120.

P. 54. "*Fro Rome to maye.*" A bantering expression equivalent to the English one,—From the first of April to the foot of Westminster Bridge. Similar forms of speech occur in the Reinardus, as—

"inter Pascha Remisque feror."—lib. ii. v. 690.

and again,

"inter
Cluniacum et Sancti festa Johannis obit."—lib. iv. v. 972.

The French have a similar saying, "Cela s'est passé entre Maubeuge et la Pentecôte.

P. 56. *Ye reysed*—Journeyed, as it is modernized by Gualtier. It is the same as the modern German *Reisen*, to travel, and occurs in Chaucer, who says, speaking of the knight,

"In Lettowe had he *reysed*, and in Ruce."

Ibid. assoyled—absolved. So in Piers Ploughman,

"And so to ben assoiled,"—l. 13, 753.

P. 57. *An hygh stage of stone.* That in old times "high stages of stone" were among the places most frequently chosen for the administration of justice, is shown very clearly by Grimm, *Deutsche Rechts Altherthümer*, s. 802, while the practice which

obtained among the Scandinavian nations of creating their kings by placing them on an elevated stone, (a practice still shadowed forth in our own coronation service), serves to illustrate very strikingly the present passage. The English reader will, probably, be reminded of the "marble table" in Westminster Hall, and the Frith stool of Beverley.

P. 58. *Broke.*—This word, which occurs again in p. 92, is by Gualtier changed in the one instance into "felony," in the second into "misdeed." It is from the Flemish *breucke*, a crime.

P. 60. *Male and staff blessyd as belongeth to a pilgrim.*—In Fosbroke's *British Monachism*, p. 326, ed. 1843, is a chapter on the consecration of pilgrims, from which we learn that after certain prayers and psalms had been said over the intended pilgrims as they lay prostrate before the altar, they arose, and the priest consecrated their scrips and staves. He next sprinkled holy water upon their scrips and staves, and placed the scrip around the neck of each pilgrim, with other religious services. Afterwards he delivered to each of them their staff, with similar prayers, &c.

P. 61. *Master Gelys*—In some copies of the Flemish metrical Reinaert, as well as in the old prose version, "Master Gelis" is here named, by whom it has been supposed the author intended *Ægidius de Lessinia*, a celebrated theologian, the friend of Albertus Magnus. In the other copy of the Flemish poem, Meester Jufroet is the authority referred to. By Jufroet, there is no doubt that Godfridus Andegavensis is meant, who lived in the earlier part of the twelfth century, and the passage in his works to which the lion refers, is thus quoted by Grimm, and Willems, from the *Biblia Patrum*, tom. xxi. p. 66; "Unde unicuique peccatori de magna Domini miseratione indulgentiam sperare licet, si se cognoverit

peccatorem, et suis proximis compatiens de peccato pœnitere voluerit.

Ibid. Palster—a pilgrim's staff. These were sometimes armed with iron, and are named among other forbidden weapons in a document printed in *Anselmi Codex Belgicus Pars II. p.* 17. See, for a full description of the pilgrim's staff, Fosbroke's *British Monachism*, p. 316, ed. 1843.

P. 62. *Yammerde.*—This word, which is clearly the same as the German *Jammern*, to lament, is by Gualtier modernized into "sorrowed." It is the Anglo-Saxon *Earmian*, which we find in the next page, under the form *ermed.*

Ibid. "*A pylgrym of deux aas.*"—Willems, who quotes a poem entitled *Frenesie*, printed by him in his *Mengelingen*, to show that *deux as* was a game,

"Nochtan eysch ic toe twee aes,"

explains this to mean that the fox was only a pretended pilgrim, or a pilgrim 'pour la farce.'

P. 63. *Ermed.*—Gualtier has altered this into "maruayled." It properly means lamented. See the last note but one.

Ibid. Retche not of—do not care for. From the Anglo-Saxon *Reccan.* Chaucer uses the word in his "Man of Lawes Prologue"—

"But natheles I recche not a bene."

P. 69. *Sybbe*,—related or allied. From the Anglo-Saxon *sib.* It occurs in the same sense in Chaucer's "Tale of Melibeus,"—"they ben but litel *sibbe* to you, and the kin of youre enemies ben nigh *sibbe* to hem."

P. 71. *A faste pardon*—a sure pardon, as it is rightly modernized by Gualtier. It is from the Anglo-Saxon *fæst*, firmus, and the epithet is still used in its original sense, in the word fastness.

P. 72. *Houe Daunce*—Court daunce, as Gualtier has it, from the Anglo-Saxon Hof.

Ibid. Playes and esbatements.—These are not pleas and abatements, as our legal friends may be inclined to suppose—but literally plays and pastimes, as Gualtier has modernized the expression—Esbatements, from the old French *Esbattement*, which Roquefort defines Passe-temps, &c.

P. 73. *To day by the morow.*—In the morning, as Gualtier has modernized it. It is the old form of the word morning, from the Anglo-Saxon *Morgen.*

P. 74. *Slonked her in.*—This expressive term, which occurs again in the next line but one, in another form, "he slange them in," is from the Flemish *Slinden*, German *Schlingen*, to swallow greedily, to devour.

Ibid. Tho wente he his strete.—His way. From the Anglo-Saxon *Stræt*, via.

P. 75. *How can he stuff the sleue with flockes.*—This obscure proverbial expression is literally translated by Caxton from the old Dutch prose. "Hoe maecte hi die mouwe mit ons vol mit vlocken." Gualtier retains the phrase, which was probably well understood in his day.

P. 76. *Sire pour Dieu.*—This passage in French, is transferred literally from the old poem, into the Dutch prose. The reader will instantly perceive its metrical construction.

P. 77. *Gonnes, bombardes.*—Bombardes are cannon. The reader will find a most complete summary of the history of guns, gunpowder, &c., in Mr. Way's edition of the *Promptorium*, p. 218, n. 4. Hoffman in his edition of *Reinike*, p. 221, refers to the *Hannover: Magazin*, 1798, s. 361, for a proof that cannon and their use were known as early as the year 1330.

P. 81. *Provande.*—Provender, from the French *provende*, see Roquefort, who defines it "Provisions de bouche." Shakspere uses it in Coriolanus, act ii. sc. 1.

"Of no more soul, nor fitness in the world

Than camels in their war; who have their *provand*
Only for bearing burdens."

P. 83. *Benaame*—took away, from the Anglo-Saxon *Benæmen*.

Ibid. The "*grete deceyte*" which Reynard here relates, forms one of the most popular fables of the Middle Ages. It is alluded to by Chaucer in his Miller's Tale.—

"The gretest clerks ben not the wisest men,
As whilom to the wolf, this spake the mare."

It forms the 91st story of the "Cento Novelle Antiche," and its literary history generally, may be read in Schmidt's Beitrage zur Gesch. der Romantischen Poesie, s. 181, et seq.

P. 84. *I can wel Frenshe, Latyn, English.*—Caxton has adapted the whole of this passage to the meridian of London. In the original there is no mention of the English language or of Oxford, &c., as the following extract will show:—

"Ich can wel walsch, latyn, ende duytsch. Ic hebbe terfforden ter scholen ghegaen. Oec heb ich mit ouden wisen meesters van der audiencien questien, ende sentencien gheheven, ende was in loeyen ghelycenceert, &c.

P. 85. *Laste*,—loss, as in Gualtier's edition.

P. 86. *Even Christen.*—Neighbour or fellow-Christian. Even, in the sense of fellow, occurs in the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, Matthew xix. where fellow-servant is rendered *efen theowa*, and even-christian for neighbour, in the old Friesic, where the commandment, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; is "minna thinne evncristena like thi selva."

The word occurs also in Piers Ploughman, and in Hamlet.

P. 87. *Bywymple with kerchieuis.*—Veil or mask the truth, as women's faces were concealed by their wimples. The edition of 1650 reads, "but he that cannot wimple falshood in truthes kerchief, hath neither art nor cunning."

Ibid. He may were scarlet and gryse.—Scarlet and gryse, the

costume of a doctor of laws. Grys is a fur, and Chaucer describes his monk as having

> "His sleves purpled at the hond,
> With *Gris*, and that the finest of the lond."—l. 193-4.

See further *Promptorium*, p. 211, ed. Way.

P. 88. *Without tatelyng*—without stammering. From the Old Flemish *tateren*, which Killian explains by *Balbutire*, *titubare*.

P. 89. *Yoned*.—This word, which is modernized by Gualtier into "wished," is from the Flemish *jonnen*, which Killian explains by *favere*.

P. 90. *I crye out Harowe on them*.—I denounce them. *Harow* was the cry by which the Normans were bound to denounce any great offence, such as theft, murder, &c. which had been committed. It is said by Roquefort in his *Glossaire* s. v. *Harow*, to be derived from *Ha* and *Raoul*, in remembrance of Raoul I, Duke of Normandy, whose memory was highly esteemed by his countrymen, for his love of justice, and the strictness with which he administered it. See further, *Ducange* s. v. *Haro*. Uncertain as is the etymology of this cry, it is probably connected with the *harahus* of the Lex Ripuaria, mentioned by Grimm, Rechts-Altherthümer, s. 794.

P. 91. *Wyken*.—Departed, or gone away, from the Flemish *Wycken*, cedere, recedere, &c.

P. 92. *Eamerick*.—This is a misprint for Camerick.

P. 93. *Inwytte*.—Reason, consciousness, from the Anglo-Saxon *inwit*.

P. 94. *Mathes*.—Worms or maggots, from the Anglo-Saxon *Matha*, the Flemish, *Maden*.

P. 96. *Sondrely wise*.—Extremely wise, from the Anglo-Saxon, *sunder*, separate or peculiar, or rather perhaps the German *sonderlich*, especially, particularly.

P. 101. *Balke*.—A beam, from the Anglo-Saxon *balc*.

P. 102. *Nether kyn, ne wyn, ne frende.*—Neither kinsman, nor friend, Wyn, a friend, from the old Friesic *Winne.* See Richthofer.

Ibid. Grete chierte.—This French phrase is introduced by Caxton; "*lief ende weert,*" are the words of the original.

P. 103. *A parable of a man.*—This fable is one of the most frequent occurrence in the literature of the middle ages. See Robert's *Fables Inédites*, &c. II, p. 51. Barbazan's *Fabliaux*, ii. p. 73, ed. Méon.

P. 104. *Avayle.*—Profit. This word, which occurs several times, see pp. 107, 126, &c. is used by Chaucer in his Court of Love:

> "By mine advice, love shall be contrarie
> To his availe."

P. 107. *Avicen.*—Avicenna or Ebn Sina, as he is properly called, was an Arabian Physician of the tenth century. He was no less celebrated as a philosopher, and his "*canon,*" as the volume in which he had collected all the medical knowledge of his time was designated, was looked upon, during the middle ages, as the text-book of medical science. The original text was first published at Rome, in 1593, and has since been frequently translated. His philosophical works translated into Latin were printed at Venice, in two volumes, folio, in 1523, and again in 1564.

Ibid. Fordeel.—Profit or advantage, corresponding with the modern German, *Vortheil.*

P. 109. *The Musehont* is the weasel, *mustela*, according to Grimm, who tells us that in the Schildbürgern, cap. 44, the cat is called the *maushund.* Hoffman considers it the cat.

Ibid. The fychews is also described by Mr. Wright in his Glossary to Piers Ploughman, as a kind of weasel.

Ibid. The martron, the marten.

Ibid. The genete, the ostrole and the doussyng.—The genete is the wild cat.

P. 109. *Hermel*, the asse.—Caxton has in this instance misunderstood his original, in which *dat Hermel* is enumerated before the ass, and not as being the name of that animal. *The Hermel*, according to Hoffman, is the Ermine, Mus Ermenus, the Ermellino of the Italians.

P. 110. "She hath the rys doe blosme agayn."—In the original "Si hevet rijs aveder begonnen doen bloeyen." She hath made the branches blossom again, or as the Editor of the edition of 1650 has improved it, "put new blossomes on my dried roses."

P. 111. *Mayster Akeryn.*—Willems supposes this to be altogether an imaginary personage. See his Note, *Reinaert*, p. 203.

P. 112. *Maister Abrion of Tryer.*—Willems supposes this also to be an imaginary personage, with a name derived from the old French *Abricon*, a quack or charlatan. Grimm, (s. c. 4. iii.) who states that he cannot find in Wolfe's *Bibliotheca Hebraica* any Jewish writer of this name, "of Tryer," queries whether the name may not be derived from Aaron, Abraham, or rather from Appirion, the diminutive of Ephraim. He adds that the name somewhat resembles in sound that of Aprunculus, the old Bishop of Triers, of the sixth century (Bouquet iii. 410), but whom any tradition, which might come down to the middle ages, would hardly convert into a Jew.

P. 112. *The Oyle of Mercy.*—The legend of Seth's bringing the Oil of Mercy out of Paradise, is poetically related in the poem "Van dem holte des heiligen Cruces," of the wood of the Holy Cross, printed in Staphorst: "Hamb: Kirchengeschichte iv. s. 203-222. See Hoffmann's *Reineke*, s. 224.

P. 113. "Late him leye this stone in a litle watre."—The virtue attributed to this stone must remind the reader of that of the "Lee Penny," on which Sir Walter Scott founded his story of The Talisman. A similar ring, says Willems, is mentioned in Floris ou Blanchefleur.

P. 114. *Wel herted.*—This will be best explained in the words of the Editor of the 1650 edition, "yet should not his heart fail him."

Ibid. Panthera.—The belief that the panther "smelleth so sweet" and that "for his sweet smelling all other beasts follow him," is one of very great antiquity. It is mentioned in the old English Bestiarius, in the Arundel MS. No. 292, printed in the *Alt-Deutsche Blatter* ii. 99, in the old German Physiologus referred to by Hoffman in his "Fundgruben, l. 16, and in Maerlant's "Naturenblome."

P. 115. *Cybere.*—In the metrical *Reinaert*, v. 5511, this colour is called *Synoper*, which Willems interprets green. Caxton mentions it again, p. 118, when he terms it "Cynope."

P. 117. *Cetyne.*—This wood is called Cetijn in both the metrical and prose Flemish versions. In the low German Reinike it is called *Sethim*, and Hoffman gives the following description of it from the *Liber de Natura* of Thomas Cantipratensis. Constat ergo quod *Sethim* arbor maxime sit; lignum ejus album ac leve legitur et incombustibile, id est de facili non cedens igni: imputribile quod nunquam aliquo humore vel antiquitate corrumpitur, quod patet adhuc in archâ Noe, quæ super montes Armeniæ incorruptibilis perseverat. De lignis istis, et archa testamenti fuisse legitur et multa alia in edificium templi et vasorum.

And the following passage from Maerlent's description of the Tabernacle in his *Rymbybel*, will serve to show that it is the Shittim wood of the Holy Scriptures:

> An die nordside dar iegen recht,
> Stont ene tafle van houte *Cetin*,
> Dair ic oec wel seker ave bin
> Dat lichtste oude ist dat men vint,
> Ende verrot niet en twint.

Ibid. Horse of tre.—This wooden horse is the *cheval de fust* which not only figures so conspicuously in the celebrated

romance of *Cleomades*, written by Adans, or Adeney le Roi, but in some of the MSS. gives its title to the poem. Much curious illustration of the history and writings of Adenéz, who was the minstrel of Henry III, Duke of Brabant, will be found in De la Rue, Histoire des Bardes, &c. ii. 36, in Paulin Paris, Lettre à M. Monmerqué, and in Ferdinand Wolf "Ueber der Leistungen der Franzosen," s. 34. In the latter work, and in Keightley's "Tales and Popular Fictions," are many notices of similar magic horses.

P. 119. *Bydwynge.*—In Gualtier's edition this is modernized into "well rule." See also note on p. 48.

P. 120. *Two grete bules.*—Two great boils or swellings. It is the Flemish and Low German *bulen*.

Ibid. And was an ass, &c.—A similar fable will be found in the old French Ysopet in Robert's "Fables inédites des xiime. xiii. et xivme. Siècles, i. 234.

Ibid. Herken ferther.—The story which the fox here relates is another of the fables so popular during the middle ages, which the author has contrived to weave into the thread of his narrative. It occurs, among other places, in the "Poésies de Marie de France," ii. 387.

P. 122. *There also stode also in that myrrour.*—For this fable the reader is again referred to Robert's *Fables inédites*, i. 195.

P. 124. *Fro scole fro Montpellier.*—Montpelier was celebrated as a seat of learning in the twelfth century, and according to Hesselin—*Dictionnaire Universel de la France*, iv. 555, medical lectures were publicly delivered there as early as 1180.

Ibid. Cloth of sylke, and a gylt gyrdle.—I must leave to my friend Mr. Pettigrew, who has made himself so completely master of that interesting field, the Archæology of Medicine, to decide when and how this peculiar costume

was first appropriated to the medical profession, and to explain why Caxton has changed the "bonte ende side," the fur and silk, of his original, into the "clothe of sylke and a gylt gyrdle." The inference is that the latter formed, in Caxton's time, the characteristic costume of the English physicians. Let me add that La Chenaye des Bois, in his most useful *Dictionnaire Historique des Français*, iii. 90, speaking of the physician of the king of France, says:—"Quand il va aux écoles de Paris, il est vêtu d'une robe de satin comme les conseillers d'Etat," &c.

P. 125. *A garlond of roses.*—On the subject of these garlands, see *Le Grand d' Aussy, Vie privée des François*, ii. 222. The nature of these garlands, and the objects and occasions on which they were bestowed, have never yet been sufficiently investigated, and the present is scarcely the place to discuss a point involved in as much obscurity, as it is replete with interest.

P. 126. *Smeke.*—Gualtier, in his edition, has changed this expressive epithet into "speak fair;" it properly means to flatter, and is the same as the old Flemish *smeecken*.

P. 126. *Not to any forwyttyng of yow.*—Reproach. It is obviously connected with the German *vorwitz*, pertness. In Gualtier's edition the phrase is altered to "not that I will cast you in the teeth therewith."

P. 128. *The mogghetis.*—The paunch. In the original "pensen darmen," the paunch and intestines.

P. 132. *Gobet.*—A part or morsel, from the French *gobet*. The word, which is used several times by Caxton (page 140), occurs also in Chaucer, whose Pardonere is described as saying:

> ——"he hadde a gobbet of the seyl
> Which that St. Peter had, whan that he wente
> Upon the sea.

P. 133. *Forfrorn.*—Frozen. Ed. Gualtier.

Ibid. Rybadously.—Indecently. Ribaud and ribaudie, occur both in Piers Ploughman, and in Chaucer, but I do not remember to have met with the word used adverbially.

P. 136. *But that he shall beryspe me.*—This is a confirmation of the former note upon the word "unberisped." In Gualtier's edition we read, instead of the above, "but that he will take me in my wordes."

P. 137. *A mermoyse, a baubyn, or a mercate.* In the Flemish prose, "een marmoeyse een baubyn of een meercat," and in the metrical Reinaert, Willems describes Mamet as an epithet of the foul fiend, and derived from Mahomet, but states that he cannot trace the name of such an evil spirit as *bakumijn* in Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie*. But it is obvious that the fox did not allude to supernatural beings. Killian explains *meer-katte*, simia caudata, and the general sense of the passage may, perhaps, be gathered from the more modern version in the edition of 1650, "a marmozin, or baboone, or else a mercat." Caxton, it may be observed, afterwards (p. 140), uses the term marmosette.

P. 140. *Nyckers.*— In this name, by which the wolf designated the fiend-like offspring of the "marmoset," we have a striking allusion to the Mythology of Scandinavia, and that portion of it which is retained among us to this day, when we designate the Evil One by the epithet of Old *Nick*. Odin assumes the name of Nikar or Hnikar when he enacts the destroying or evil principle, and scarcely a river of Scandinavia which has not its appropriate Nikr. See further upon this curious point, Grimm Deutsche Mythologie, s. 256-265, 2te. Ausge.

P. 142. *My glove.*—Consult on the subject of challenging by throwing down a glove, and of accepting such challenge

by the taking up of the same, Grimm's Deutsche Rechts-Altherthümer, s. 154.

P. 142. *This campyng.*—This fighting, from the German, *kampf*, a fight, *kampfen* to fight.

P. 143. *Borowes.*—Pledges, bail, security. This word occurs in almost all the Teutonic languages. In the Anglo-Saxon we have *borh*, used precisely in the sense in which Caxton uses the word, see Thorpe's *Anglo-Saxon Laws.* It occurs also in Piers Ploughman,

> "And broughtest me *borwes*,
> My biddyng to fulfil."

And in Luther's version of the Old Testament, Genesis xliii. v. 9, we read "Ich will burge fur ihn seyn."

P. 120. *Glat.*—Slippery, from the Anglo-Saxon *glid*, slippery, or from *glad* the participle of *glid*, to glide or slip.

P. 145. *Blaerde shay.*—Hoffman, in a note upon the corresponding passage, in his edition of the *Reinike*, refers to his "Beitrage zur Gerchichte der Segens-und Beschworungs-formeln," in the Monatschrift, v. u. f. Schlesien, 1829, s. 751, and to his Fundgruben, i. 260-3 and 343-5, for an illustration of similar ancient forms of adjuration. Willems further refers to Mone's *Anzeiger*, 1834, s. 277.

P. 146. *Stryked.*—To go forth, from the Anglo-Saxon *strican.* It occurs in the Creed of Piers Ploughman, under the form straketh.

> "With sterne staves and stronge
> Thei over lond straketh."—l. 163-4, ed. Wright.

P. 146. *The losse.*—The lynx, which is called the *lossem* in p. 156.

P. 148. *Plat blynde.*—Gualtier has altered this into "starcke blind."

P. 149. *Snelle.*—Quick, the German *schnell.*

Ibid. Afterdele.—Disadvantage, in contradistinction to *fordele*, which has occurred so frequently.

P. 150. *Raught.*—Reached, from the Anglo-Saxon *ræcan*, past tense *rahte*, to reach. Chaucer uses the word in his admirable description of the Prioresse,

> "Full semely after hire mete she raught."

And in several other passages.

P. 151. *Clope.*—A blow, the German, *klopf.*

P. 152. "That it stode so rowme."—That affairs were in such a position.

Ibid. The holy grave.—The holy sepulchre. On the subject of such Pilgrimages of punishment and penance, see Fosbroke's British Monachism, p. 346, ed. 1843.

P. 152. "For whan ye hereafter shall slepe."—This taunting speech, uttered even at a moment when the fox is seeking to propitiate the favour of his rival, is highly characteristic of that combination of impudence, confidence, and audacity which distinguish Reynard from the other actors, in this strange drama.

P. 155. *Locked.*—Caught, from the old Flemish *locken*, or rather the Anglo-Saxon *læccan*, to seize or take. The same word occurs in "Piers Ploughman."

> "And if ye *lacche* Lyere,
> Let hym noght ascapen,
> Er he be put on the pillory."—a. 1286-8.

Ibid. Swete floyting.—This word occurs in Chaucer's description of the Young Squire,

> "Singing he was or *floyting* all the day."

And is explained by Tyrwhitt "playing on the flute." But as the Flemish *fluyten* signifies both to play on the flute, and to tell lies, it may be doubted whether, in the present case, the latter interpretation is not to be preferred.

P. 157. *Flyndermows.*—In Gualtier's edition we read *field mouse*, but it is more probably the bat, the *vledermus* of

the Flemish *Reinaert*, which Killian explains by Vespertilio, mus volucer, &c.

Ibid. Grete Loos.—Great praise or honour; in which sense the word is used in "Piers Ploughman."

"Ne good *loos* of hise handes."—l. 7164.

P. 160. *Scatte and pylle.*—Tax and rob. The former word has already been explained in the note on page 44. The latter is from the Anglo-Norman, see Roquefort, s. v. *pille*, *pilleur*, &c.

P. 162. *My bayle.*—Bailiff. The sheriff is now the king's bailiff, whose duty it is to preserve the rights of the king within his *bailiwick*; for so his county is frequently called in the writs. See Blackstone, book i. cap. 9, p. 344, ed. 1778.

P. 163. *Missake.*—Renounce or forsake, from the old Flemish *mis-saecken*, negare.

Ibid. Wryved.—Rubbed, from the old Flemish *wrijven*, atterere, fricare, &c.

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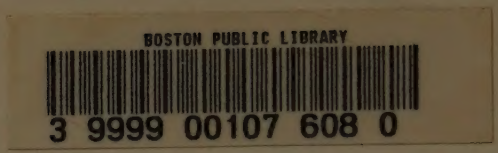
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